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Taunton Castle—Eastern Gateway.

Somersetshire Archaeological

and

Natural History Society.

Proceedings

DURING THE YEAR

1853.

TAUNTON:

FREDERICK MAY, HIGH STREET.

LONDON: G. BELL, 186, FLEET ST.

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THE Society is indebted to E. A. Freeman, Esq., for the use of the original drawings from which the following sketches were taken, given in the present volume : Somerton Church ; St. Peter's Church, Luffwick ; and Stoke-sub-Hamdon Church, (3 plates) ; and likewise to W. F. Elliot, Esq., for the anastatic drawings of Taunton Castle—South Front, and North Front ; and the etching of the N. View of the East Gate from a drawing by W. P. Pinchard, Esq.

The Committee are not responsible for any statements or opinions expressed in the Proceedings, the authors of the several Papers being alone answerable for the same.



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PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
SOMERSETSHIRE ARCHÆOLOGICAL AND
NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY,
DURING THE YEAR 1853.

PART I.

THE Fifth Annual Meeting of the Somerset Archæological and Natural History Society was held at the Town Hall, Yeovil, on Tuesday, September 13th, 1853,—WM. PINNEY, Esq., M.P., in the Chair.

The meeting commenced as usual for the transaction of business, at eleven o'clock. The President, Vice-Presidents, and the District or Local Secretaries and Treasurers were severally re-appointed. Wm. Pinney, Esq., M.P., was elected a Vice-President; the Rev. W. A. Jones was elected one of the general Secretaries; J. Yates, Esq., and J. W. Salter, Esq., were elected Honorary Members; W. F. Elliot, Esq., W. E. Gillett, Esq., Wm. Kelly, Esq., M.D., W. Metford, Esq., M.D., T. Patton, Esq., W. P. Pinchard, Esq., and the Rev. T. A. Voules, were re-elected, and J. Batten, junr., Esq., the Rev. W. T. Redfern, and F. W. Newton, Esq., were elected Members of the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN opened the proceedings with a short and
1853*, PART I.

appropriate speech, in which, after referring to the objects of interest visited on former occasions, he mentioned many curious relics of antiquity in the district adjoining Yeovil, particularly calling the attention of the company to the remains of ancient domestic architecture which abound in the neighbourhood of that town.

The following Report of the Committee for the past year was then read by the Rev. F. WARRE, one of the Secretaries of the Society :—

“On this occasion, being the Fifth Annual Meeting of our members, the Committee have great pleasure in being able to congratulate the Society upon a considerable increase in the number of subscribers. The last published list contained 420 names; that for the present year contains no less than 499, shewing an addition to the subscriptions of last year amounting to £25; which, while it indicates an increase of the Society, gives at the same time hopes of more extensive operations and increased usefulness.

“Nothing is perhaps more likely to conduce to the permanence of a society such as ours, than the possession of valuable property; and in addition to the Williams’s Geological collection, the great value of which is undoubted, the Committee have the pleasure of congratulating the Society upon the acquisition of an extensive and very beautiful collection of Oriental Birds, presented by the Hon. E. A. Blundell. The arrangement and display of both these collections have been advanced, during the last year, as far as the funds of the Society would allow. In the arrangement and labelling of the Geological specimens, in addition to the invaluable services of Mr. Baker, the Committee have received great assistance from the kindness of Mr. Salter, one of the curators of the Museum of Practical

Geology, whom, as a slight token of their estimation of his services, they have appointed an honorary member of the Society. Owing to an unfortunate misunderstanding, as to what fossil specimens the Society felt itself justified in parting with, only a small sale of duplicates has as yet taken place ; and the lamented illness of Mr. Baker, to whom the negotiation was committed, has hitherto prevented his making any report as to the probability of any farther sale being eventually effected.

“Many objects of archæological interest have been deposited and presented since the last annual meeting. Among the most valuable are twelve of the curious Anglo-Saxon coins discovered in Wedmore churchyard. These coins were claimed by the Lords of the Treasury, and of course given up ; but upon a memorial being presented to them, seven were restored, and those which were retained for the British Museum, have been replaced by others of equal rarity and value, of which there were duplicates in that collection. Considering the short time that has elapsed since the establishment of the Society, the rooms at Taunton contain a very respectable collection both of Antiquities and specimens of Natural History, as well as many miscellaneous objects of interest and rarity.

“The annual volume of Proceedings being now in the hands of the members, its contents must of course speak for themselves ; but the Committee venture to hope that a considerable improvement will be observed in the quality of the illustrations ; no pains, and, as far as the funds would permit, no expense having been spared, to render them worthy of the Society, both in correctness and artistic execution.

“A complaint having been made by some members, of

difficulty in obtaining their volumes, the Committee take this opportunity of repeating that booksellers have been appointed (as mentioned in the circular letter) in most of the considerable towns of this county, as well as in Bristol, from whom the volumes may be obtained on presentation of the enclosed form, signed by the member who requires the volume. It is particularly requested that members will present these forms, as they are the only vouchers the Publisher has to show that the books have been duly delivered.

“With regard to the payment of subscriptions, the Committee beg to remind the Society that they are payable in advance ; and as the list of names affords the only data by which the Committee can calculate the income of the Society, and consequently the amount of liability they are justified in incurring, all subscriptions, of the withdrawal of which notice has not been given before they became due, must be considered as belonging to the Society.

“The *Conversazione* Meetings have been held as usual during the winter, and still appear to maintain the interest excited in previous years.

“On the whole the Committee feel that they may congratulate the Society on its prospects. Its members and its property are increasing, a fine and extensive field of operations is before it, and there seems to be no want either of ability or good will to work in it. Our funds are as yet equal to our expenditure, but it is much to be wished that some means could be devised of increasing them, as without a larger income we can hardly procure the plans, drawings, books, &c., needed to render us a body really and effectually beneficial to the interests of archæological and natural science.”

The morning meeting was followed by the Ordinary, which was well attended.

The Evening Meeting.

Mr. JAMES YATES, F.R.S., delivered an address upon the Botanical and other Natural Productions of Australia, which he illustrated with many specimens.

Mr. CHARLES MOORE read a paper on Fossil Infusoria.

Mr. STREET read a paper on Palæography.

Mr. J. BATTEN read a paper on the manner in which Sequestrations were carried out by the Parliament during the Civil War, which is given in Part II.

The Rev. F. WARRE, Secretary to the Society, read a paper upon Taunton Castle, which is given in Part II.

The company then adjourned to the ante-room, where refreshments had been provided by the Portreeve and other inhabitants of the town of Yeovil.

Second Day.

Wednesday, September 14th, 1853.

THE proceedings were resumed shortly after nine o'clock, when the chair was taken by F. H. DICKINSON, Esq., the High Sheriff of the county, in the absence of Mr. Pinney.

Mr. WALTER, of Pyrcombe Hill, read a paper on Hamdon Hill, which is given in Part II.

After a few notes by Mr. Freeman, of the Architectural

Remains about to be visited, had been read by Mr. WARRE, the company proceeded on an Excursion to the site of a Roman Villa, at Coker, where extensive excavations had been made for the occasion by W. Helyar, Esq., of Coker Court, and various interesting Roman remains brought to light. After this they visited Nash, Brympton (the history and architecture of which were explained by Mr. E. Batten), Odcome, Hamdon Hill, where Mr. Walter acted as leader, the Church of Stoke-sub-Hamdon, (an account of which, by Mr. Freeman, was read in the churchyard, by the Rev. F. Warre,) and the Priory and Church of Montacute. The company were afterwards hospitably entertained in the beautiful Elizabethan mansion, the residence of W. Phelps, Esq.

At the Evening Meeting a paper, by Mr. FREEMAN, on the Architecture of the Neighbourhood of Yeovil, was read by Mr. Warre, which is given in Part II.

After a short address on Roman Antiquities from Mr. YATES, and a few words on the discoveries at Worle Hill, from Mr. WARRE, the meeting closed.

The Museum.

THE Museum formed a very attractive feature at the meeting. A portion of the Hall having been divided off by a partition, the various articles contributed were arranged in excellent order by the Curator of the Society, Mr. BAKER, assisted by several persons who very kindly volunteered their services. The circular issued by the Honorary Secretary of the Local Committee having been very cordially responded to by the ladies and

gentlemen resident in the town and neighbourhood, the Museum was well furnished. Among the most attractive and interesting objects contributed were the following by GEORGE HARBIN, Esq., of Newton House:—A Deed of Grant out of the Exchequer, under the Broad Seal of England, by Charles II., of Annuities of £200 each for their respective lives, to Rachel and Frances Wyndham, daughters of Sir Francis Wyndham, of Trent, on the petition of his wife, Lady Anne Wyndham, and on the surrender of an annuity for her life of £400 granted by Charles II., to the said Lady Anne Wyndham in the 19th year of his reign, in consideration, as recited in the said Deed, of the good and faithful service performed by Lady Anne Wyndham, in being instrumental to his preservation after the battle of Worcester. Date of Deed 34th year of the reign of Charles II. A Cap worn, and a Knife used, by Charles II., whilst in concealment at Sir Francis Wyndham's, at Trent, in the county of Somerset, after the battle of Worcester, September 3rd, 1651. A Medal of Charles I., and Henrietta, his wife, belonging to the late Sir Thomas Wyndham, Bart., father of Sir Francis Wyndham, of Trent. A Portrait (in distemper) of Elizabeth Woodville, wife of Edward IV., Date 1461. A Drinking Cup, with part of a Buck's horn, found in a field at Stoford, in Barwick, belonging to Mr. Harbin, in 1826, in a stone vault hewn in the solid rock, and covered with a rough stone slab, three feet in width and four feet in depth, containing a human skeleton, placed in a sitting posture with the drinking cup on one side and the Deer's horn on the other, near which another vault was opened, containing the skeleton of a horse; at a little distance another very large vault was discovered, containing an immense quantity of human bones, mixed with earth and stones, the covers being broken by

the pressure of the superincumbent mass of earth, from five to six feet in thickness.—Mr. R. SHOUT contributed some fine Rubbings of Sepulchral Brasses from Westminster.—A curious Carved Oak Panel, representing Abraham offering up his son Isaac, and which for many years adorned the kitchen of the Old Angel Inn, Yeovil, was exhibited by Mr. H. M. WATTS.—Another very fine piece of carved work was contributed by the Rev. J. WILLIAMS.—Mr. DOWTY, of Bridgwater, sent a great variety of antique curiosities.—Mr. ALFRED A. CLARKE, artist, of Taunton, exhibited a Portfolio of Original Sketches in pencil outline, of Somersetshire subjects; and a Portfolio of Pencil Drawings of mediæval remains, ecclesiastical, and manorial.—The Society was also indebted to Mr. JAMES YATES, F.R.S., for the exhibition of some plants of the order Cycadeæ, &c., and of a Leopard's skin, which had been worn by one of the Grandees of Abyssinia, it still being the practice in that country to wear this costume at court and on the field of battle, a costume preserved in those ancient Greek sculptures, which represent Bacchanalian processions.—A small but valuable collection of Fossils was exhibited by Mr. C. MOORE, of Ilminster. Among others, a small Teleosaurus, found in the Lias, containing in its stomach a small fish; and a series of minute shells of the family Foraminifera, from the neighbourhood of Yeovil.—Dr. SYDENHAM, of Yeovil, exhibited a fine and very perfect, though not large, specimen of the Ichthyosaurus; and his father, the Rev. J. SYDENHAM, contributed a valuable collection of Manuscript Books, comprising: 1. A large Folio MS. written in Roman letter, the Homilies of St. Chrysostom, written at the cost of Christopher Urswyhe, for the Monastery of Hales, in Gloucestershire, in the

ninth year of the reign of Henry VIII. It is stated to have been written "*Arte Petri Maji Unoculi, Teutonis Natione, Brabantine.*" 2. A Psalter with interlinear Commentary, written in 1514, for the Monastery of Hayles. 3, 4, 5. "*Books of Horce,*" one of the use of Rouen, another of that of Poictiers—all being exquisitely illuminated with delicate borders of flowers, and large drawings of sacred subjects, saints, &c. The first contains numerous entries of the Deny family, dated from 1550 to 1600. 6. A curious MS. relating to ceremonies and discipline, with forms of excommunication for a great variety of offences. 7. A MS. collection of French Poems, 13th century, in its original oak boarding. 8. A beautiful MS. of the Vulgate, 14th century.*—Among the curiosities contributed by J. M. QUANTOCK, Esq., of Norton House, were the remains of a skull dug from Ham Hill, about 30 feet below the surface.—A sword found in Sedgemoor, and supposed to have belonged to an officer engaged in battle in that locality, was contributed by Mr. CAVE.—A rich collection of ancient armour was contributed by Mr. NORRIS of South Petherton.—Mr. G. P. SLADE contributed some very beautiful little sketches of the old George Inn, Yeovil, the oriel and door of the Abbey at Nash, the Font at Bradford Church, and drawings of the Ilchester Mace, with its inscription, "*Jesu de Deu Crie neme Dun et Mie.*"—Mr. T. MANNING contributed some Rubbings from the Sepulchral Brasses of Giles Pennie and his wife in Yeovil church, and the inscription on the lectern, which has puzzled antiquaries to decipher.—Mr. CUSTARD, junr., contributed fifteen drawings on various subjects, which were greatly admired. He also contributed a sketch of Bradford Tower, Dorset, which he presented to the Society.—Mr. HIGHMORE

* Now deposited in the Society's Museum, at Taunton.

exhibited some Roman Coins found on Ham Hill, and on the Roman Road which runs through his property at Preston.—Mr. WARRY, of East Chinnock, contributed some beautiful specimens of Moorish Pottery, and a box of Moorish Coins.—Mr. WATTS, of the Mermaid Hotel, sent an ancient Roman Vase, dug up at Ham Hill some years ago ; it was in a perfect state of preservation, and when discovered was filled with copper coins, chiefly of the later Roman Emperors.—Mr. BABINGTON, of Sherborne, contributed twenty Ammonites, illustrative of the Geology of Sherborne.—Mr. W. STUCKEY contributed a local curiosity, in the shape of a venerable copper tea-kettle, which was the first ever used in the parish of Muchelney ; and some antique silver spoons, date of 1673.—Rev. G. FAGAN, Rector of Kingweston, exhibited some very rare and interesting curiosities ; a Monumental Tablet from Thebes, in Egypt, of the date of the Ptolemies, representing the judgment of the deceased.—Mr. BRITTON, of Butleigh, exhibited the figure from a crucifix, and a death's head, (both in Ivory), found in the old chapel of the Magdalen Alms House, at Glastonbury ; an old glass, containing a crucifix in wood, and other figures, many years in the possession of a family at Kingsdon ; and Fossils.—Mr. E. BATTEN contributed a curious sketch of Porter's Tomb, Rampisham, with the bas-relief representing the murder of Thomas a' Becket.—Mr. ALFRED GILLET, a case of shells, &c.—Mr. VINING showed four fine specimens of conglomerated fossils, dug up in Marston Magna. Two of these were cut and beautifully polished. Also, a turtle stone (polished), found in the Backwater, at Weymouth.—Mr. W. FROOKS, of Sherborne, contributed a carved stone cross, with eight carved figures, representing the Crucifixion, Virgin, &c. This is a very curious and interesting piece of sculpture,

and probably formed the top of a churchyard cross.—Mr. ARNOLD COLES contributed a very fine collection of medals; and other objects of interest.—Mr. J. PYNE, of Somerton, presented a very perfect figure of Hercules, found in the ruins of Corteia.—Mr. RAWLINS showed a number of Ammonites, highly polished.—Mr. SWATRIDGE contributed some very beautiful Mosaic slabs.—A Case of Birds from the neighbourhood of Yeovil, was sent by Mr. SEWARD.

In addition to the above, many other contributions were forwarded from the neighbourhood, and a considerable number of articles were sent up from the Society's Museum, at Taunton.

The following contributions to the Museum of the Society have been received during the year 1853 :—

A Bust of Abraham Reed.—JONATHAN TOOGOOD, Esq., M.D.

Sticcado Pastorale, a musical instrument, from Switzerland ; Part of Deer's Horn, from Westhay Moor.—Rev. W. PHELPS.

Twelve Saxon Coins, from Wedmore Churchyard.—Through R. P. EDWARDS, Esq.

A Painted Wooden Mask from New Zealand ; A pair of Buffalo Horns from South Africa ; Jaws of Ichthyosaurus.—C. H. CORNISH, Esq.

A remarkably fine specimen of the Actiniformis, or Mushroom Coral.—Through DR. FALCONER.

Psalm Book, dated 1636 ; Stuffed specimen of Young Fawn ; Specimen of Gorgonia Flabellum ; Stuffed specimen of Raven.—Mr. C. BLUETT.

Rubbing from Brass, at Weston-upon-Thames.—F. W. NEWTON, Esq.

Four Rubbings from Brasses, at Westminster.—R. H. SHOUT, Esq.

Impression of Luther's Seal.—Mr. W. C. BALL.

Pamphlet on the lowest Fossiliferous Beds of North Wales.—J. W. SALTER, Esq.

Caffir Spear.—Rev. J. E. LANCE.

Two pamphlets on the Classification of Celts.—DR. HUGO.

New Zealand Rug.—MISS GROSVENOR.

Barnes' Poems in the Dorset dialect.—MISS PINNEY.

Two casts of Seals of the Haviland family, dated 1261, and 1370.—A. HAVILAND, Esq.

Casts of Celt moulds.—JAMES YATES, Esq.

New Zealand Wrapper.—R. M. KING, Esq.

Cannon Ball, from Sedgemoor.—R. WALTER, Esq.

Description of Fossil Skull of an Ox, with a Geological Sketch of the River Avon, in which it was found. Lithographed Signatures of Members of British Association, met at Cambridge, 1833.—MR. F. MAY.

Burmese Dresses, Sword, Manuscript, Poisoned Arrows, and Shoes ; a Malay Crease, Antelope's Horns, Elephant's Tooth, &c.—THE MISSES ROBERTS.

Pilgrimages to St. Mary of Walsingham, and St. Thomas of Canterbury.—By Post. Donor unknown.

A Sikh Matchlock and Accoutrements ; Flying Squirrel ; Flying Fish ; Antelope's Horns ; Tinder Box, from Chinese Tartary ; Burmese Idol.—CAPTAIN NISBET.

Polished Slab, from Mendip.—MR. SWATRIDGE.

Head of Dorset Ram.—MR. VERRIER.

Pottery, Coins, &c. &c., from Worle Hill.—Rev. F. WARRE.

Large Collection of Egyptian and other Antiquities ; Books, Drawings, &c., &c.—T. DAWSON, Esq.

The following have been deposited as Loans :

A collection of Australian Plants.—

Rev. W. P. TREVELYAN.

Twelve Drawings of Roman Pavements.—

J. W. KING, Esq.

A collection of Somersetshire Bats, &c.—

W. BAKER, Esq.

Bibliotheca Somersetensis.

THE Committee are desirous of collecting materials for a complete List of all Books, Tracts, or Manuscript Documents relating to, or published in, Somersetshire, or written by natives of the county; and they would feel obliged if members or others would supply them with the following particulars of any they may know.

Name of the Author.

Title in full, with the publisher, date, and size.

Public or Private Library, where a copy exists.

Conversazione Meetings.

Third Season.

AT the Conversazione Evening Meetings of the Society, held at the Museum, in Taunton, during the winter of 1852-53, Papers on the following subjects were read.

1852, *November—1st Meeting.*

On the Antiquities of Taunton ; by the Rev. F. Warre.

A Phrenological description of a Skull ; by Mr. R. Walter.

On the Camp on Worle Hill ; by the Rev. F. Warre.

„ *December—2nd Meeting.*

On Electricity ; by W. Metford, Esq., M.D.

On the Life of St. Thomas a' Beckett ; by Mr. E. Batten.

On the Geology of Somerset ; by the Rev. W. Phelps.

1853, *January—3rd Meeting.*

On the Formation of Peat Bogs and Turbaries ; by the Rev. W. Phelps.

On Change ; by Mr. Andrew Crosse.

On Clouds ; by Mr. C. N. Welman.

On the Monastic Establishments of Taunton ; by the Rev. F. Warre.

1853, *February—4th Meeting.*

On English Poetry and Poets ; by the Rev. J.
H. Chowne.

On the Tides of the Bristol Channel ; by the
Rev. W. Phelps.

,, *March—5th Meeting.*

On Ecclesiastical Architecture ; by the Rev. T.
L. Petit.

On Egyptian Hieroglyphics ; by the Rev. W.
R. Crotch.

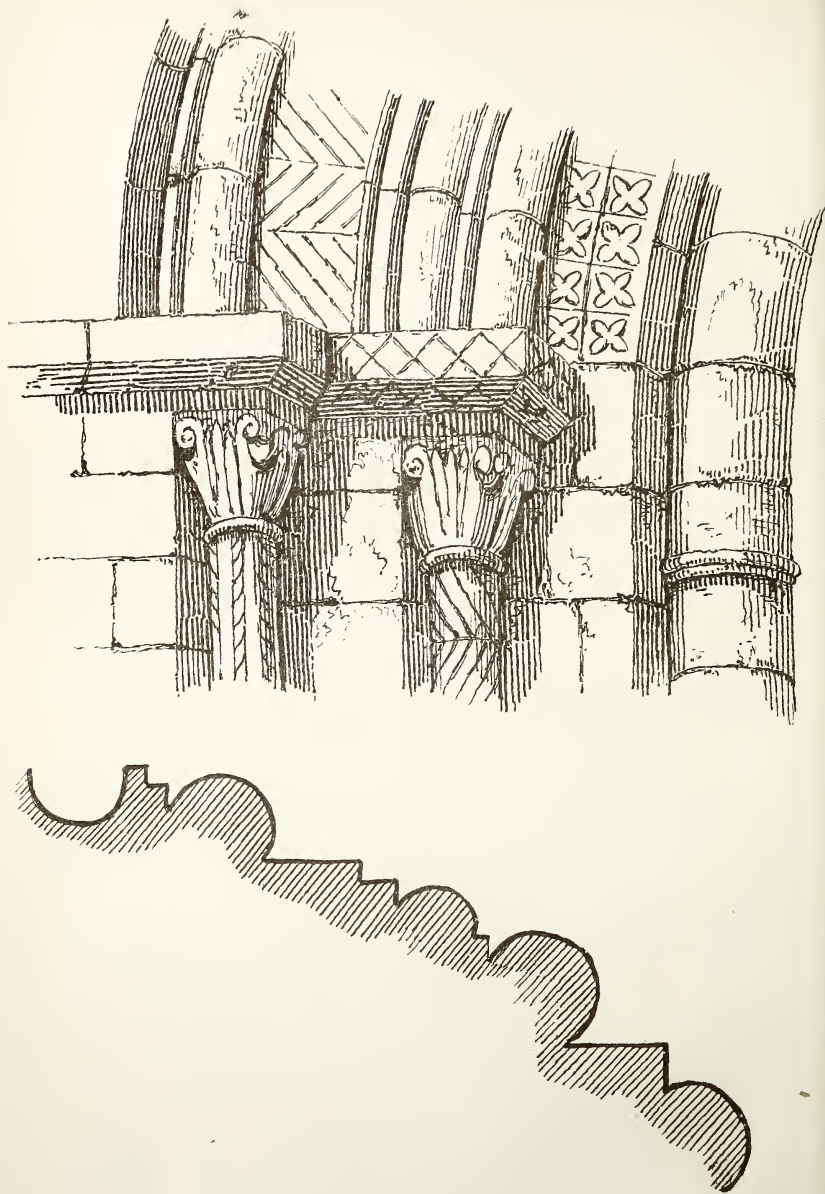
On English Poetry and Poets ; by the Rev.
J. H. Chowne.

,, *April—Extra Meeting.*

On Electricity ; by W. Metford, Esq., M.D.

On Tower Architecture ; by Mr. C. E. Giles.

On Kingston Church ; by the Rev. Eccles J.
Carter.



Chancel Arch—Stuke sub Hambdon Church.

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
SOMERSETSHIRE ARCHÆOLOGICAL AND
NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY,
1853, PART II.

PAPERS, ETC.

On the Architecture of the Neighbourhood
of Yeovil.

BY EDWARD A. FREEMAN, M.A.

I AM truly sorry that I am unable to attend this year, as I have had great pleasure in doing for two years past, at the Annual Meeting of the Somersetshire Archæological Society. I have indeed no doubt that my time will be as agreeably and as profitably spent at that of the Cambrian Association: I only regret that the arrangements of the two Societies should interfere with one another, or that I am not invested with the privilege of ubiquity, which would enable me to attend both. But though I believe the Brecknockshire Beacons are visible from some parts of the county of Somerset, yet the towns of Brecon and Yeovil are sufficiently distant from one another to render it impossible to read Papers at both on the same day, and

not altogether convenient to do so even within the same week. So then, as Brecon was an engagement on my part of older standing, I am reluctantly compelled to absent myself entirely from your proceedings of this year, and to leave my annual contribution to your volume to be laid before you by a very efficient deputy.

In my two former Papers I have said nearly all I have to say about the Perpendicular of Somerset, passing but cursorily over the remains of the earlier styles. But as Yeovil possesses in its neighbourhood some of the best specimens of the latter class, a Yeovil meeting seemed a good opportunity for attempting a somewhat more attentive consideration of them. But I do not mean to confine myself very pedantically to the immediate neighbourhood of the town, though I will promise not to require you to follow me all the way to Bath at one end or to Minehead at the other. I may here mention that the very best architectural day's work which I ever remember to have done, was one which had Yeovil for its starting point. Montacute, Stoke Hambdon, Martock, Kingsbury, Muchelney and Huish, form a perhaps unparalleled succession of attractive objects, both ecclesiastical and domestic. Nor was my next day's work of Langport, Long Sutton, Somerton, and Huish again, at all contemptible, although hardly to be compared with the former. Many of the results of those two days I have already laid before the Society; others I have reserved for the present occasion. With numerous examples I have made acquaintance during the present month, under the auspices of Mr. Dickinson and Mr. Fagan, as I did with others two years ago under those of Mr. Warre and Mr. Giles.

The first thing that strikes the observer in the earlier

churches of Somerset, is the universal absence of aisles; the second is the frequent presence of transepts; the third is the octagonal form not uncommonly given to the towers. I have alluded to all of these in my previous papers; but I will now comment on them a little more at length. I travelled from Burnham to Kingweston, and made two considerable excursions thence, both in the direction of Yeovil, without seeing a single church with regular aisles, but cross churches of every variety I found in abundance. In fact I think I may safely say that the occurrence of aisles in a Somersetshire church earlier than the Perpendicular period is something quite exceptional, unless in the case of quite large buildings, like St. Cuthbert's at Wells. But transepts occur extensively, even when the tower is not central. Sometimes we find an original central tower, or a later one which evidently replaces an original one; sometimes a side tower forming one transept; often a grand Perpendicular tower has been added; sometimes the church has remained without a tower to this day. But under all these modifications, the cross form still remains the typical ground-plan of the district and period. The use of the octagonal tower, as was first pointed out to me by Mr. Giles, stretches over a long narrow line of country from about Taunton nearly to the eastern boundary of the county. As far as I have seen, I regard it as the distinctive Somersetshire steeple of early times, just as the grand western tower is of later. It has often been raised in Perpendicular times, it may occasionally be of Perpendicular erection from its foundation, but in all such cases it is evidently a mere retention of an earlier practice; it never catches the true Perpendicular character; it may have Perpendicular belfry windows, but it always remains in its essential conception, a work of an earlier period. Also its proper

position is only less regularly, either central or lateral, than that of the fully developed Perpendicular tower is invariably western. Even the square western tower was rarely used ; the common alternatives seem to have been a central tower of either form, a lateral octagon, or no tower at all. We have seen how often the earlier type of Somersetshire influenced the later, but no two types can well be more opposite to one another, in the more fully developed specimens of each. And the earlier type of which I am speaking is not spread over the whole county. For instance, I do not call to mind an instance of it north of Mendip; that is, not of its most distinctive characters, for cross churches with central towers of course occasionally occur, as at Yatton and Whitechurch.

These Somersetshire octagons have a very peculiar character, and it may be worth while to compare them with those which occur in another region, where the octagonal form is also frequent, namely, Northamptonshire. Two marked differences strike at once ; the Somersetshire octagon is a sign of early work ; that of Northamptonshire is generally late ; the Somersetshire octagon is the tower itself assuming the octagonal form ; the Northamptonshire is an addition made to a square tower, which might exist without it, or at most an altered shape given to its upper portion. Stanwick is the only case which occurs to me of a tower at once of early date and octagonal from the base. The Somersetshire octagon again is, when most distinctive, central or lateral, while the Northamptonshire octagon is invariably western, and often supports a spire.

It may be worth while, as the examples in the two districts are not positively very numerous, to compare them a little in detail. I have said that in the Somersetshire



GOULD, ANTHONY, DEL. & PRINCE

St. Peter's Church, Luffwick.

octagons, it is the tower itself which assumes the octagonal form, while in Northamptonshire the octagon is only part of the tower, or even distinctly an addition to it. This is true, although there is only one Somersetshire octagon which I have seen, that at Barton St. David's, which is octagonal from the ground, and that of course only on the side away from the church. The central octagons of North Curry and Stoke St. Gregory have indeed no square base appearing above the roof, and so may come under the same head; that at South Petherton I have not yet had the good luck to see. But the lateral octagons of Somerton and Bishop's Hull, and the western ones of Ilchester, and Puddimore Milton, all rise from a square base rising to about the height of the church, or nearly so. Yet every one would call these octagonal towers: even at Somerton, where the square base rises to a greater height than in the others, it is the octagonal form which determines the character of the tower. In short, *in Somersetshire the square is a mere base to the octagon, while in Northamptonshire the octagon is a mere finish to the square.* Thus at Irthlingborough, at Luffwick, and at Fotheringhay, the octagon is added to a square tower of considerable height, and rises from within the distinct parapet and pinnacles of such square tower. The square tower of Luffwick, rising two good stages above the roof, would be an amply sufficient steeple without the octagon; in the other two cases the square tower alone would be rather low, but still it is distinctly finished. At Fotheringhay this is still more marked than in the other cases, as it has not those enormous pinnacles, which at Luffwick receive the flying-buttresses of the octagon. At Wilby, where the octagon supports a spire, the former is indeed taken out of the height of the tower, of which it forms the

belfry-stage; but still the square portion rises a whole stage above the roof of the church, and has its own parapet, pinnacles, and flying-buttresses. At Nassington the belfry-stage itself suddenly becomes octagonal at about half its height. At Barnack, the octagon, an Early Gothic one, is added to the old Saxon tower, or possibly has supplanted its belfry-stage. Still the latter rises a stage above the church, and the octagon, as at Nassington, is merely a base for the spire. At Milton Malsor the spire and its octagonal base are such mere additions to the predominant square tower, that I had almost forgotten to include this example in my list. At Helpstone alone have I found a Northamptonshire tower on the Somersetshire model; here the square base is of the height of the church, where it turns into an octagon of two stages, very like Ilchester or Puddimore, save that it again supports within its parapet a dwarf octagon and spire. But even here, where the octagon is decidedly itself the tower, and not a mere finish to the square, I suspect that before the existing clerestory was added, the original roof abutted wholly against the square portion, whereas at Puddimore, and still more at Ilchester, it comes up against the octagon.

Of distinctive detail I have not observed much in these earlier churches, except an elegant practice, not indeed altogether distinctive of Somersetshire, though certainly far more common there than elsewhere, that of foliating the rear-arches of windows. I was glad to find that my friends who are rearing the graceful new church at Kingweston have introduced this beautiful local feature: I could wish they had also preferred the local coved ceiling to a form which, though good in itself, belongs to Sussex and not to Somerset.

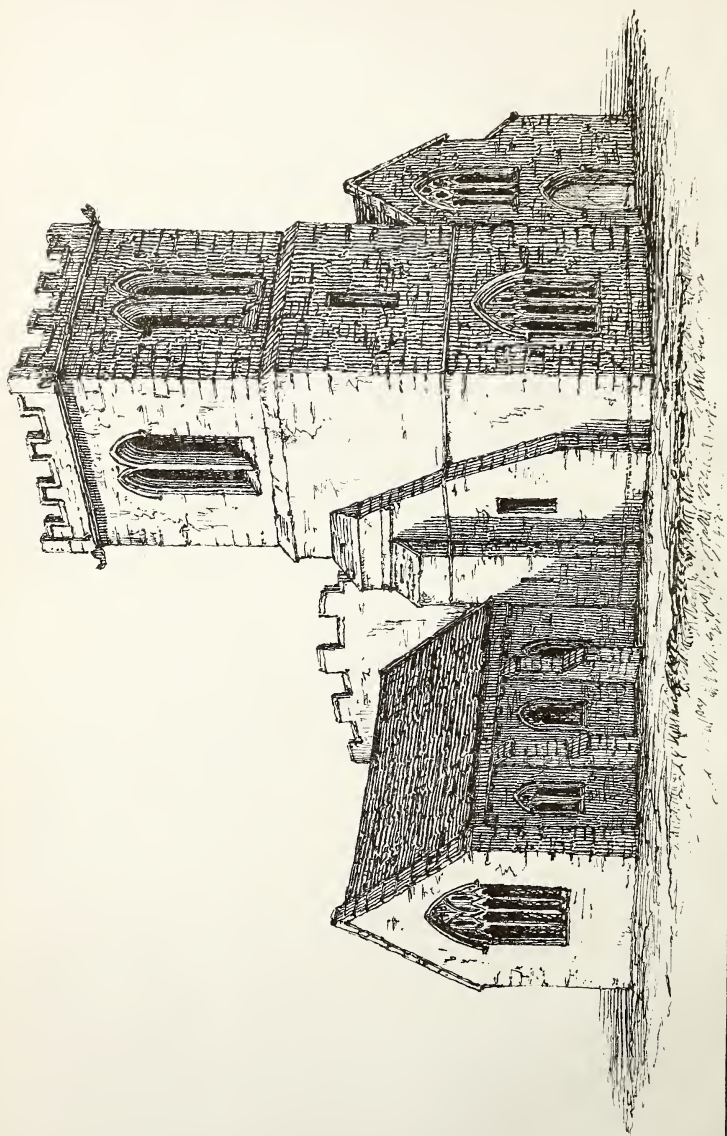
I will now mention those churches of the district and

period on which I am engaged which struck me as most worthy of notice, adding some brief account of those domestic buildings in which this region is so singularly rich. I shall ask my hearers to accompany me on a somewhat long circuit,—an imaginary journey, in fact, which I have patched up out of four or five real ones. I will suppose you then to have diligently studied Yeovil church, with the criticisms which I offered on it last year in your hands, as they may be found in the Society's last published volume. I thence ask you to accompany me first to *Brimpton*. I do not quite know how to take you from Yeovil, as I myself reached the place from quite another direction; but I will suppose you somehow conveyed (with the Rector's leave, if it would involve a trespass) to the spot just in front of the parsonage. From that point, one of the most striking architectural groups I know will be seen lying in the hollow beneath. A large and stately mansion, a house of humbler pretensions, and the parish church, all lie close together, and all are worthy of attentive study. The church is small, and was originally a Decorated cross church, without aisles or tower. The south transept, with a beautiful Geometrical window to the south, and a foliated arch connecting it with the nave; the foliated south door, and a piscina in what was the north transept, are all pleasing examples of that style, and enable us to form a good notion of a Somersetshire church of the earlier period. But some benefactor of Perpendicular times, some inhabitant doubtless of the adjoining mansion, whose name and exact date some local antiquary will, I doubt not, be able to supply,* founded a chantry for three priests. He

* It appears, from Mr. Batten's account, that the architectural changes were all made about the same time, in the reign of Henry VII., by a benefactor of the name of Sydenham; but that the original foundation of the chantry was due to an earlier family, named D'Evercy, temp. Edward I.

built for their dwelling-place the house which still remains on the north side of the churchyard, and modified the church to adapt it to his purpose. He made an eastern addition to the north transept, and altered the direction of its gable, so as to give it the external appearance of an aisle, while internally it makes two chapels, the south transept being doubtless the third. A stone roodscreen, that uncommon feature in a parish church, must date from the same period; so also must the western bell-cot of a very distinctive character, a wiser addition, I think, than either a meagre tower, which would have been of no beauty in itself, or a magnificent one, which would have destroyed the beauty of the rest of the church. I cannot speak with equal praise of the addition of a flat panelled ceiling, which, though very good in itself, cuts off the head of the beautiful south window. The chantry house is an oblong Perpendicular building of two stages, chiefly remarkable for the octagonal turret which gives access to the upper one, which is so large as to have quite the air of an oriel. A good open roof and some fine plaster ceilings of later date, will be found above. The great house, to which the chantry house now forms a horticultural appendage, presents a west front of great splendour, which is throughout essentially of good Perpendicular architecture, though extensive portions have been altered in later styles. The north-west portion is untouched, and presents a magnificent display of oriels, turrets, chimneys, and open battlements. The central part, containing the hall, has been altered in Elizabethan times, but it retains its original basement, and a curious kind of oriel, which, now at least, acts also as a porch.* The south part has been still more

* Mr. Batten says this oriel was added in 1722. I should like to look at it again; but, speaking without book, I should have thought this was rather the date when the door, which looks like an interpolation, was cut through.



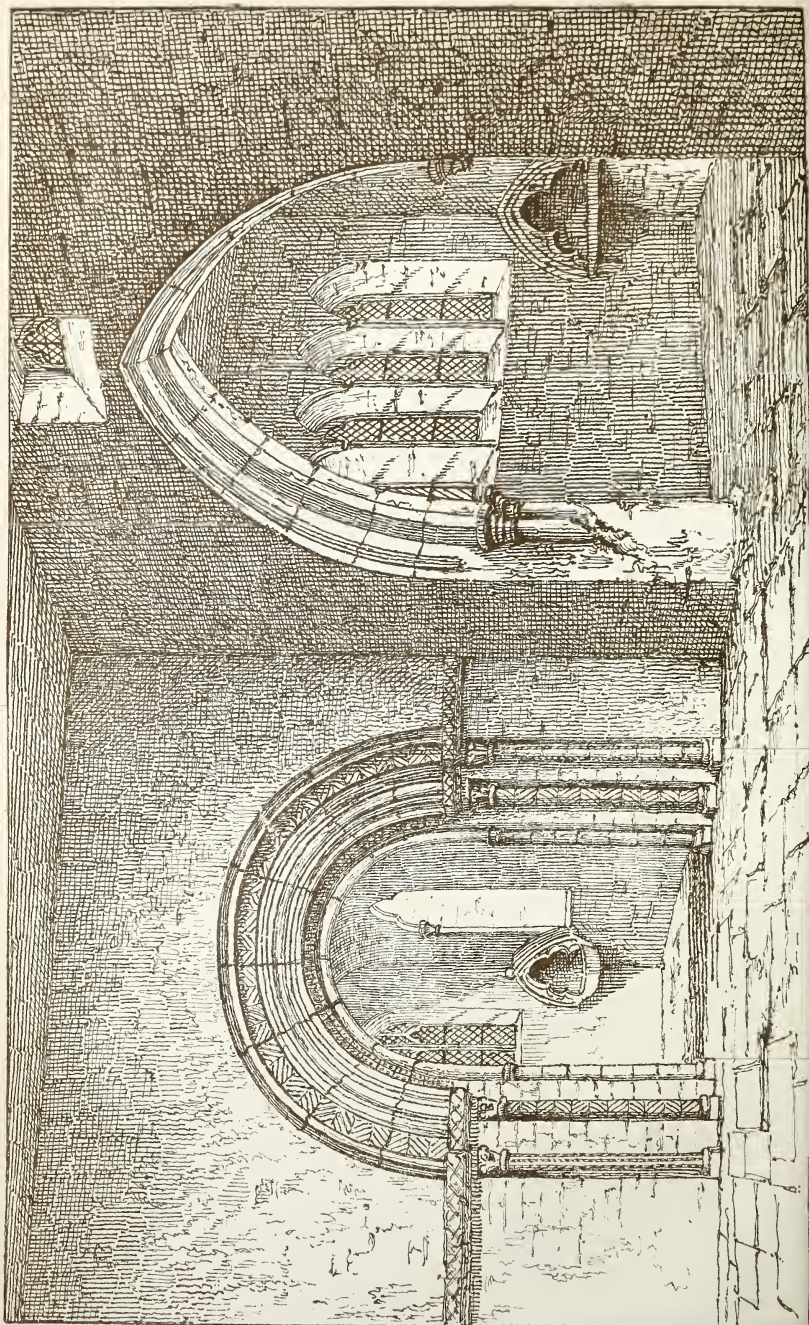
St Luke and Andrew Church.

recently altered in an Italianizing style, in which also a grand southern porch has been added, but the walls are original, as the chimney and some of the windows testify. These are the main features of the exterior ; its internal arrangements I must leave to some more favoured visitor than myself to describe.

From Brimpton I must conduct my party up a hill to *Odcombe*, a church which forms a very prominent object in the landscape. It is a church with the tower placed as at Iffley, and the outline is very good. Its most important portions have been remodelled in Perpendicular, but a careful examination will soon show that it is a mere recasting of an Early English building. We now descend, and in a little time find ourselves in the village of *Montacute*, where a rich store of antiquities is gathered under the shadow of the hills. To the church I have already had occasion to allude, on account of the excellent Perpendicular tower which has been added to its west end. But the church itself is essentially one of the earlier type ; indeed it contains earlier work than any we have seen, having a good, though plain, Norman chancel arch of three orders. The greater part of the church seems to belong to the turning point between Early English and Decorated ; the south transept arch belongs rather to the former style, the north to the latter ; the windows in both and also in the chancel are Geometrical. Probably all are parts of one renovation, between the accomplishment of whose several portions a good deal of time was allowed to elapse. Few villages, few towns even, are richer than Montacute in domestic architecture. Besides the well-known Elizabethan mansion, some excellent remains of the Priory exist near the church. These consist of a gateway and some adjoining domestic buildings. The very fine Perpendicular gateway,

with its oriel and bold staircase-turret, has rather a collegiate than a monastic look. Its general character and its position with regard to the other buildings reminded me much more of several gateways in Oxford than of any other conventual gateway I recollect. There are also scattered about the village streets several other houses, with oriels and the like, which seem to date from tolerable Perpendicular times.

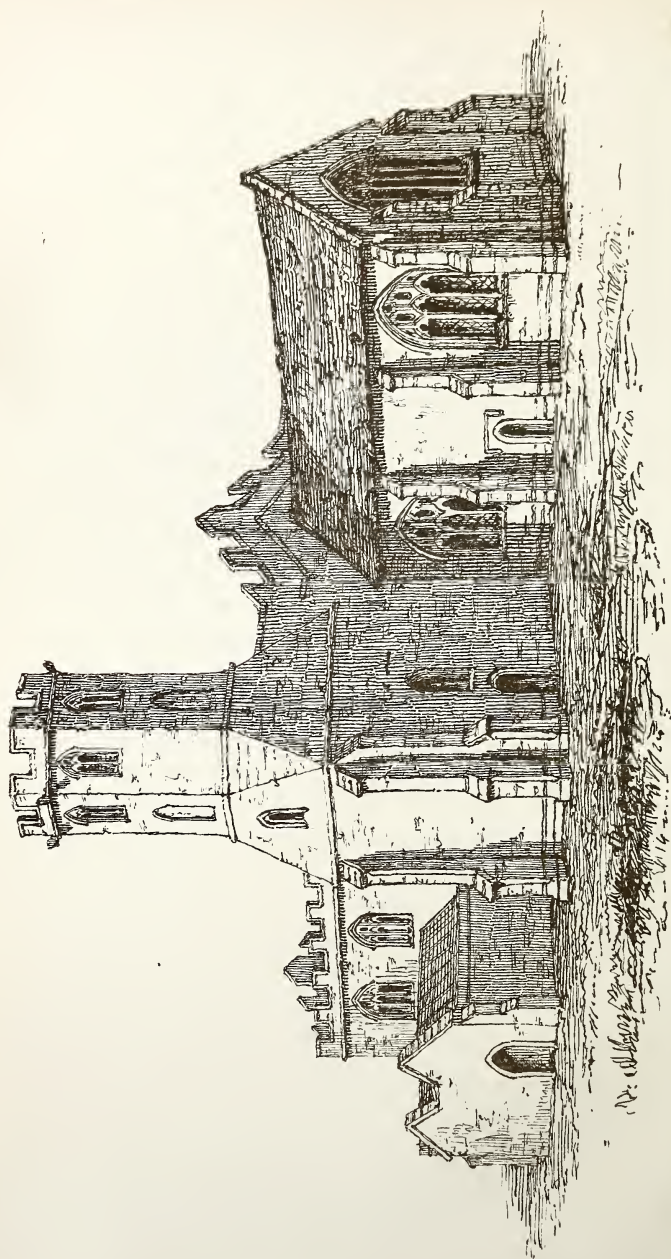
We next come to the church of *Stoke Hambdon*, that temple of strange destinies, which, as local tradition asserts, "was built *for* the Roman Catholics, but was never occupied *by* them." The points of ecclesiastical history involved in this curious statement, I shall leave others to decide; I shall content myself with attempting to fix the age of the erection of its several parts, without striving to discover how far the authors of each of them held that the Bishop of Rome had or had not any jurisdiction in this realm of England. The original church was Norman, and probably consisted of a nave and chancel only; of this fabric we find remains of the north and south doorways, and also the extremely fine chancel arch. This last is profusely enriched, and there is a peculiarity in its soffit, to which is attached a heavy roll, running continuously round, with only a small band ranging with the neckmoulding of the shafts. The Early English period rebuilt or remodelled the chancel and added transepts. The northern one, as I mentioned in my last year's paper, forms the tower. It is a plain, bold, massive structure, with a belfry stage of exquisite masonry, with two lancets in each face. Within it exhibits a fine specimen of vaulting, rising from shafts with floriated capitals and octagonal abaci. The south transept is later, approaching the Decorated style; it has a noble range of trefoil lancets on each side, and similar ones occur



in the chancel. We must also remark the cinquefoiled piscinas, which are placed in an unusual, though not quite unique, way across the angle both of the chancel and transept. Of complete Decorated work we have the large vaulted porch, with an unusually large window in its parvise, and whose vault cuts through the original Norman doorway. There are some other insertions of windows of this date, two of which on the south side, including the south window of the transept, are designed in evident adaptation to the Early English ones in their immediate neighbourhood. In the porch, as was just mentioned, and at the west end, the architect did not consider himself thus bound by precedent, and employed the large traceried window, in this case of the Reticulated variety, more usual in his time. The Perpendicular age did little beyond lowering the roofs of the nave and south transept, and embattling the walls of the former. A few windows were inserted, including a large one in the south wall of the nave, which involved the destruction of the original entrance on that side, in lieu of which apparently a doorway was now inserted in the west front. I know of few churches, great or small, more interesting than this of Stoke Hambdon. In this one little building we find specimens of all the principal æras of our national architecture, of which the two earlier dates supply thoroughly good and typical examples. The Norman chancel arch, the tower, the ranges of lancets, are equal to anything of their respective classes with which I am acquainted, and the Decorated and Perpendicular insertions though not of equal merit, are by no means contemptible. Nor are the architectural attractions of the place confined to the church; there are the remains of a considerable mansion, to which however, I shall make but a sorry guide, as I have by me, nothing better than a general picturesque view of its exterior.

If my company are wiser or more fortunate than I was, they will now diverge to *South Petherton*, a place to which I can only act as a finger-post, and shall be happy to receive their report of the central octagon when they rejoin me at *Martock*. Here however I shall have no great occasion to linger; we have only to mark the beautiful eastern quintuplet, and to express a wish that this, as well as the east windows at Yeovil and Burnham, may all experience a speedy unblocking. We must however also cast a glance on the Decorated house, recently illustrated in Mr. Parker's beautiful volume on Domestic Architecture. At *Muchelney* we shall find the ruins of the Abbey, which I should very much like to inspect again more at leisure than I was able to do the only time I saw them. But I remember a beautiful Perpendicular cloister, and that the domestic buildings seemed to be built up against the west end of the church in an unusual manner.

Huish Episcopi I must put to a strange use. I feel half inclined, as I contemplate that glorious tower even in no better representation than my own drawing, to renew my old fight with Mr. Ruskin, to point to those gradually ascending buttresses—I beg pardon, crutches—those bands of foliation, those magnificent windows with their delicate screens of open work, and that imperial diadem of battlements and pinnacles, and ask of the reviler of England's noblest glories, whether this too is an “ugly church tower,” a specimen of “savage Gothic” or “detestable Perpendicular.” I am even tempted to break a lance with my respected friend Mr. Warre as to the “principle of spire-growth,” only that I am somewhat mollified by finding that he agrees with myself in placing even glorious Huish after still more glorious Wrington. But my present business is not with this magnificent tower, but with the poor little church to which it forms so wonderful an excrescence. The



COVFILS. ANASTASIA. (See p. 100.)

church has been much altered by Perpendicular architects, but it is evident that it was previously one of the small cruciform churches of the district. A Norman doorway to the south marks the original foundation of the church ; a Decorated window to the north, the probable addition of the transepts. But of these, the northern one alone retains its natural shape ; its southern fellow has been enlarged into a sort of imperfect aisle, not only externally, as at Brimpton, but within also ; so that this church now contains a *pillar*, a feature not generally found in churches of this type, and here due only to later alterations.

An exception to this last remark will be found in the next stage of our journey, namely, at *Somerton*. The church of this little town exhibits the type of which we have been treating developed to an unusual scale ; besides the transepts, of which the southern one forms a tower, we find a nave with arcades and aisles of the Decorated period. We must confess that the grand attraction of *Somerton*, its magnificent tie-beam roof, is the addition of a later age, and that the Decorated arcades, with their plain octagonal pillars, are of little value or beauty ; but the tower is an excellent study of the octagon of the district, slightly modified by the addition of a stair-turret to its whole height, and there are some good Decorated windows, especially a very elegant two-light Arch and Foil one in the north transept, At *Charlton Mackrell* is a cross church of very pleasing outline, with a central tower. The actual building is mostly Perpendicular, but the Decorated north transept, with its extremely fine north window of five lights, a Geometrical skeleton filled up with Flowing patterns, proves the existence of a cruciform church in earlier times. The trefoil doorway on the north side of the chancel should also be noticed.

I am not quite certain whither I ought now to direct your steps. You must not omit the grand Perpendicular house at *Lytes Carey*, with its Decorated chapel, retained from an earlier mansion, its noble hall, with its poor windows and fine open roof, its porch, its oriels, its state rooms with their rich ceilings and panelling of later date, and a small feature which attracted my attention in no slight degree, a door-screen enriched with linen pattern and a crest of Tudor flower. Compare the eastern and southern fronts of *Lytes Carey*; one a mass of gables and projections, the other a perfect flat, broken only by the central oriels; the chapel attached at one end; something so wholly distinct as in no wise to invade its uniformity. Here is a clear lesson that the picturesque effect of a Gothic building is not to be sought by a conscious striving after irregularity, by accumulating a gable here, a turret here, a chimney there, but by making each portion of the building serve its own purpose, and tell its own tale. A hall, a chapel, a porch,—a journey to Glastonbury might perhaps teach us to add, a kitchen,—must stand forth as distinct portions with distinct roofs; but mere ranges of ordinary rooms need not be gabled and gabled from a mere abstract love of gabling. If we are to pick holes, it might be deemed a fault at *Lytes Carey* that the hall does not tell its tale till we get within the quadrangle, and that in the south front, the magnificent parapet of the oriel seems to make something of the kind felt as lacking along the whole extent of the wall.

Lytes Carey must, undoubtedly, be seen, and yet I want to convey my party, though it is a long way from Yeovil and trenching on the jurisdiction of Glastonbury, to the newly restored church of *Butleigh*. This was a church of the same plan as *Odcombe*; transepts have recently been

added, which seems to me to be the most natural mode of enlargement, if enlargement were necessary. Now, as I want you to be on the whole pleased with this restoration, I must ask you not to look at the monuments in these same transepts, much less to read the very blank verse which is written upon one of them. Come into the chancel, and see a Somersetshire roof restored as it ought to be, the good old coved ceiling boarded, and its eastern bay richly painted; here we have the best of all substitutes for a vault, indeed it is a barrel vault in wood. Turn round then, and judge how far superior the genuine local ecclesiastical roof is to the hall roofs which have been allowed to intrude into the other parts of the church.

We may now turn our face slightly Yeovil-wards, and take in succession three octagonal towers, *Barton St. David's*, *Puddimore*, and *Ilchester*. I have alluded to all of them before; Barton has its tower lateral and octagonal from the ground, the others are western, and set on square bases. Barton has also some good examples of the foliated rear arch, and is altogether a picturesque and pleasing little church. I would however suggest that the individual playing on a harp, depicted on the western gallery, seems to betoken a slight confusion between the Archbishop of Menevia, who, as I conceive, is the David from whom Barton takes its name, and the homonymous King of Israel. Get rid of the gallery, and the false hagiology will go with it. To return to architecture, the octagons at Ilchester and Puddimore do well to compare together, especially in the different ways in which they are connected with the square base. There is something ingenious about the Puddimore device, but the simpler arrangements at Ilchester better please the eye. I also prefer the more massive proportions of its untouched Early English tower,

to the superadded Perpendicular stage at Puddimore. I cannot say much for the two churches ; neither have any original aisles or transepts ; Ilchester, however, has a late chapel added to the north, which tries to be very fine, but hardly succeeds. The incipient Geometrical east window of Ilchester is the best thing in either of them. *Chilthorne Dormer* is a little church which took my fancy greatly, with its quaint bell-cot, like that at Brimpton somewhat enlarged. It has an east window, like Ilchester, and some other pretty details. *Thorn Coffin* is hardly worth stopping for, except because it has a bell-gable. These three are the only instances I have yet seen in Somerset, though there may doubtless be others. Numerous as are the cases in which the original church was towerless, in every other instance which has come within my knowledge, some subsequent benefactor has been found to supply the deficiency.

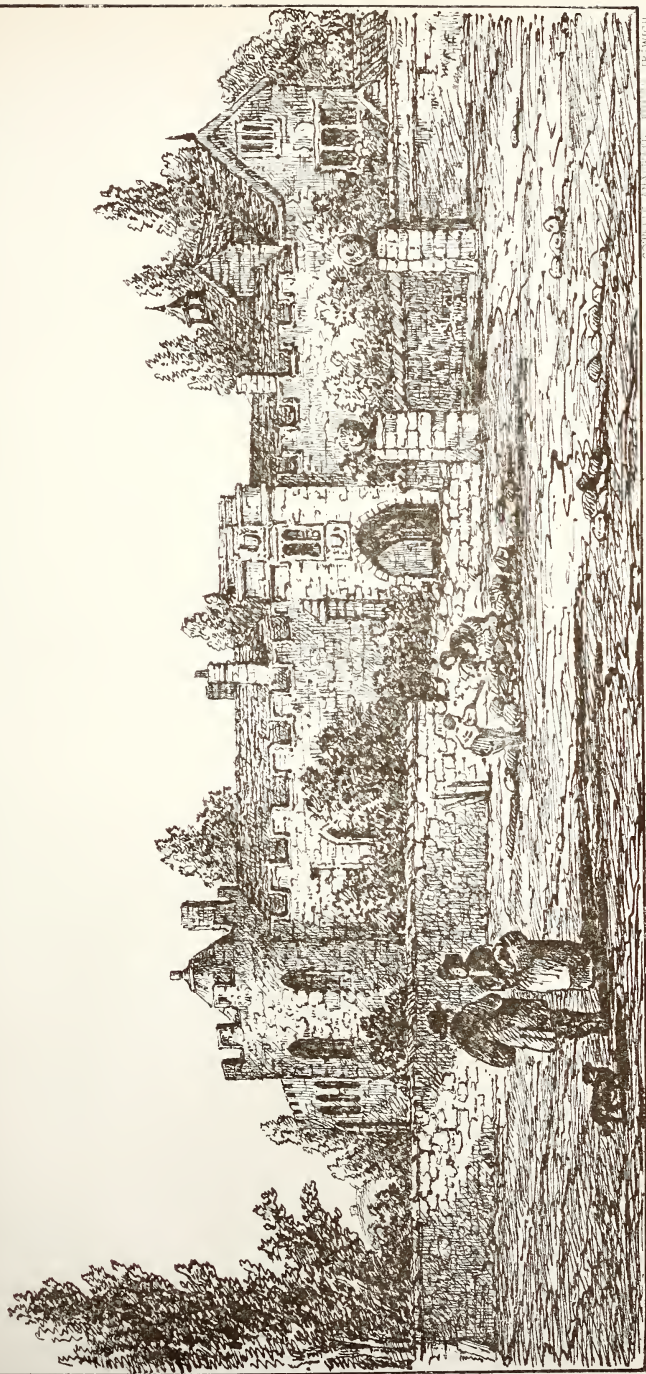
My long circuit is now accomplished, but I cannot help stepping beyond its limits to mention again a few churches to which I have already alluded, and a few that I have not mentioned. *Trent* has a noble example of a lateral tower and spire ; it is balanced to the north by what I might call a transept, were it not gabled to the east. The cruciform church of *Ditcheat* retains in its chancel, modified as it is, a fine series of Decorated windows with the foliated rear-arch. *North Curry* and *Stoke St. Gregory* I cannot allude to too often as most instructive examples of the central octagon. At *Woolavington* may be seen the comparatively rare feature of lateral triplets in the chancel. This church had a western chapel, now destroyed, beyond its western tower. *Bawdrip* is a good specimen of a simple cross church with a central tower ; *Othery* gives the old arrangement modi-

fied only by its Perpendicular tower; while *Middlezoy* retains as beautiful a series of Geometrical windows as is easily found in Somerset or elsewhere. My journey homewards, my revisitings of Glastonbury and Wells and Wrington and Yatton, my introduction to Chewton and Blagdon towers, to Harptree spire, and the Norman interior of Compton Martin, I must keep for another occasion, or at least not trouble you with at present.

Cauntton Castle.

BY THE REV. F. WARRE.

AT the commencement of the eighth century, about one hundred and fifty years had elapsed, since Cerdic, landing at Cerdicshore, probably on the coast of Hampshire, had laid the foundation of the West Saxon Kingdom. During this interval, under the rule of able and warlike Sovereigns that state had gradually increased in power and importance, and at the time of which we speak under the auspices of the brave and wise Ina, was rapidly progressing to that superiority over the other states of the Heptarchy, which enabled Egbert and his successors to assume the supreme government, and eventually to become sole monarchs of the Anglo-Saxon nation. The Saxons, at first a race of heathen savages, as fierce and barbarous as ever laid waste a Christian and civilized country, had evinced a wonderful aptitude for improvement and government. No longer heathens, their kings and chiefs had become, in most cases, zealous, though perhaps ignorant Christians; while the laws of Ina, still extant, furnish ample proof that while carrying on a desperate contest during two centuries, with the Romano-British inhabitants of the



Caerlaverock Castle—South Front.

island, this energetic and intellectual, though, undoubtedly, fierce and sensual race, had not neglected the improvements of domestic civilization or the science of civil government. But though thus powerful and increasing, the kingdom of Wessex, particularly on its western side, was anything but secure. On the heights of Quantock, Bleadon, and Brendon, as well as in the fastnesses of Exmoor, the Bretwallas, or British Welsh, as they are called by the Saxon historians, still held their own; while the whole of Devon and Cornwall was still inhabited by the descendants of those Danmonii, who had resisted the invasion of the men of Galedin, generally known as the Belgæ, and now improved by an admixture of Roman blood, and rendered formidable by the remains of Roman discipline, maintained an almost unceasing warfare against the usurping Saxons, under the command of their daring leader, Geraint, prince or regulus of Cornwall; and it was for the purpose of checking their inroads, and strengthening his western frontier, that Ina, in the year 702, determined to build a fortress on the site of the present Castle of Taunton.

In order fully to appreciate the advantages of this situation, it is necessary to consider the changes which a period of more than eleven hundred years has worked on the face of the country. To a person looking towards the south from Plais-street, the name of which implies that a road existed there in Roman times, the view presents a tract of highly cultivated and richly wooded land, extending in undulating beauty to the base of the Blackdown hills, which, with the bold height of Neroche, form on this side the outline of the picture, sinking with a gradual and easy slope from the high ground at Wilton, on the right, to the level plain, which extends towards Bridgwater, on the left; in the fore ground stands the town of Taunton, conspicuous for

its beautiful towers, between which and the spectator the Thone winds its slow course towards the Parret, through a narrow level of fertile and verdant meadows. But at the beginning of the eighth century this beautiful vale must have been occupied in great measure by the primæval Forest of elm, on which the Saxon husbandman was only beginning to make impression. Here and there might be seen the ruins of earlier civilization, the broken walls of Roman villas, and spaces cleared for cultivation, by those whom the barbarous invaders had exterminated or reduced to slavery. The Thone untrammelled by lock or weir, was then a rapid and shallow stream, which, beginning to lose the speed with which it had hurried from the western hills, pursued a more winding and deeper course as it passed between the thickets of alder and willow, which then covered the western part of the marsh. At the confluence of a small stream, flowing from the south with the river, a little to the right of the spectator, was a small space of ground, slightly elevated above the marshy level, affording a dry and firm situation for the intended castle ; protected on the north and west by the river and stream, and at a distance from the higher ground sufficient, in those days, to prevent its fortifications from being dangerously overlooked. Here it was that Ina built his castle, constructed, no doubt, like other Saxon strongholds, chiefly, if not entirely of wood, and consisting of little more than a strong palisade of wooden beams, surrounded by a moat, and containing the hall and other buildings which the simple habits of those days required to form a residence fit for a warlike monarch. Here he is said frequently to have resided ; and here it is not improbable that he compiled that code of laws which has done more to render his name illustrious than either his wars or his pious liberality, though the

first greatly tended to the consolidation of the West Saxon Kingdom, while to the latter the Cathedral of Wells, and the English College, founded by him at Rome, bear ample testimony. But this Castle, in spite of its advantageous situation both for security and political purposes, was not destined to be of long duration, for having been occupied by Ealdbert, a rebel noble, it was besieged and taken by Queen Ethelburga, and its destruction is thus briefly recorded in the Saxon Chronicle, under date, A.D., 722. "This year, Queen Ethelburga destroyed Taunton, which Ina had formerly built. Ealdbert wandered a wretched exile, in Surrey and Sussex, and Ina fought against South Saxons."

But though the castle was thus destroyed, it is probable that the town continued to flourish, for in the next reign we find that the devout Queen Frethogitha prevailed upon Ethelard to bestow the town of Taunton, then a royal residence, on the Church of Winchester; nor must it be supposed that its fortifications were altogether destroyed, for in those days no place of importance could be totally destitute of fortifications without being exposed to the constant danger of being plundered either by outlaws or more legitimate assailants. Savage, indeed, says that a new Castle was built about the time of the Norman conquest, by one of the Bishops of Winchester; and it is certainly not improbable that Walkelyn, to whom and St. Peter, the Conqueror made a particular grant of lands in the neighbourhood, might have fortified the manorial residence, a precaution which the enmity of the conquered Saxons would undoubtedly render advisable to an usurping Norman prelate. But, however this may have been, I can find no positive mention of any Castle at Taunton, from the year 722, when, as above stated, that built by Ina was

destroyed by Ethelburga, until the reign of Henry I., when William Gifford, who, as Bishop of Winchester, at that time held the lordship of the town and manor of Taunton, built a strong Castle upon the site of the Saxon fortress. From the number of documents dated at Taunton Castle, it appears to have been frequently occupied by the Bishops of Winchester, and was enlarged and strengthened by them from time to time, as their convenience or security required. In the year 1490, Bishop Langton repaired the whole building. In the year 1496 the inhabitants of Cornwall being highly irritated by the oppressive manner in which the taxes, newly imposed by Henry VII., were levied upon them, rose in resistance of them, and having taken the Castle of Taunton, cruelly murdered the Provost of Penrhyn, who had sought refuge within its walls, and the next year, under the command of Perkin Warbeck, again occupied that fortress; but upon hearing that the King was in person leading a strong army against them, evacuated the place just in time to save it from the horrors of a siege.

In the year 1577, the Castle was again repaired and altered, by Bishop Horn. The last mention of Taunton, as a place of military importance, occurs in the reign of Charles I., when it was occupied by the Parliamentary army, and, after a short investment, taken from them by the royal forces, under the Marquis of Hertford, and was again seized by Blake, whose occupation and defence of the town and Castle against a very powerful royalist army, under Goring, is, perhaps, one of the most remarkable instances of military daring and skill recorded in the history of that eventful time. Shortly after the restoration it was dismantled, by order of Charles II.; and though parts of it are still used for civil and domestic purposes,

its fortifications being no longer required for the purposes of defence, have gradually fallen into a state of complete ruin. Time, and the still more destructive inroads of modern utilitarianism, and still worse, the vandalism of modern improvement, have well nigh obliterated the remains of this venerable abode of episcopal and feudal power. Even since I have turned my attention to its ruins some of its most interesting features have past away for ever; and it is in the hope of recording what still remains, and of preserving some idea of its original features, before every trace of its plan has vanished, that I venture to lay before this meeting the results of my investigations among the neglected fragments of Taunton Castle.

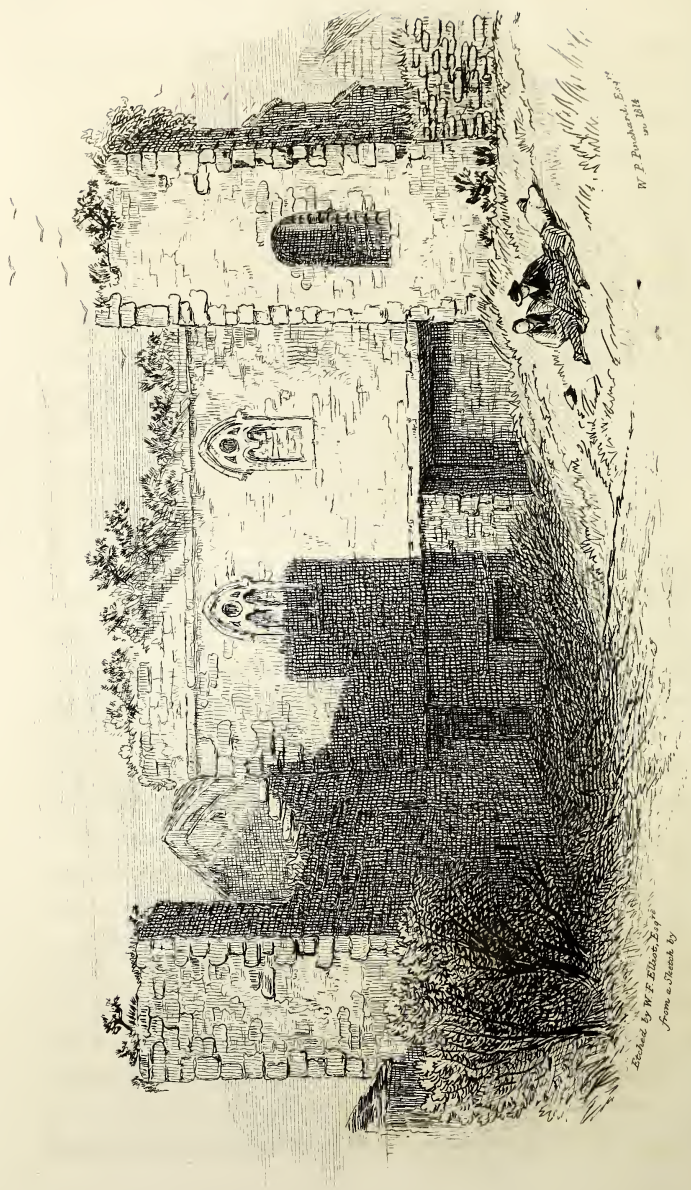
The style of fortification prevalent in Saxon times, was, as might be expected in so early a stage of society, extremely simple, consisting of little more than a deep trench, the earth from which being thrown inwards formed a high bank or agger, which was further defended by a palisade of strong wooden beams, or in some few cases of great importance, by a wall built on the top. The shape of this enclosure was usually determined by the lie of the ground on which the fortification was constructed; and such buildings of wood as were required for the convenience of the garrison were erected within. Of these castles nothing probably remains, beyond the trench and mouldering agger. But after the invasion of the Normans, a people much farther advanced in all the arts of war and peace, a massive and substantial style of fortification was introduced, many noble specimens of which have come down to our days in a state of comparatively high preservation, forming the most stately and impressive features of many of our finest castles. The most important feature of this style, was the keep, in the plan of which a remarkable uniformity prevails

both in Normandy and in this country. It was usually square or oblong; one or two squares in height, having the common flat Norman buttresses rising from a plinth, and dying into the wall a little below its summit; those at the end of each side usually join at the angles, and being carried above the top of the wall, form square turrets at the angles of the building. The openings in the lower part of the keep are mere loops, those in the upper story which contained the principal apartments, are Norman windows of the usual form, sometimes double. Whether these keeps were finished with a battlement, or plain parapet, it is impossible to decide with any degree of certainty, as those which remain are probably later additions. The entrance to the keep was, in most cases, by an arched doorway upon the first floor, near one of the corners, the staircase leading to which is contained in a smaller square tower, placed against the side of the main building. Newcastle and Castle Rising, are very fine and perfect specimens of this style of fortifications. This keep, together with the walls of the enceinte, of which in some cases it formed a part, and within which the other buildings for the accommodation of the garrison were situated, was surrounded by a moat, either wet or dry, according to the circumstances of the locality, and together with a lofty artificial mound, constituted the usual fabric of a Norman Castle. During the thirteenth century, a more scientific style of fortification was gradually introduced, in which flanking towers, enabling the garrison to defend the intermediate curtain wall from salient points, superseded the massive structures, whose passive strength had been the chief dependence of the Norman engineers; and in the reign of Edward I., the second type of English castle, known as the Edwardian, or concentric, was fully developed. We now, in place of a

solid keep, find an open quadrangle, having its sides defended by flanking towers, and its entrances by embattled gate houses ; and around the quadrangle two, or even three concentric lines of defence were drawn, containing between them the same number of courts or bailies, in the inner of which were situated the principal buildings, such as the hall, chapel, &c., while the offices, stabling, and frequently the mill, occupied the middle and outer courts. The entrances were defended by gate towers, with portcullises, and drawbridges ; and barbicans, or *têtes-du-pont*, were erected, usually of wood, outside the counter scarp of the ditch. Of this type of Castle, which is said to have been introduced by an engineer of the name of Elrington, Caernarvon, built by Edward I., furnishes a magnificent example. These are the two great types of the English Castle, and though improvements were introduced by Wykeham and others in later times, we find in almost every case the main features of these types, either separate, or when additions had been made to an original Norman Castle, very commonly combined. This appears to have been the case in Taunton Castle,—the general plan of which I will now endeavour to point out, by the help of this very excellent ground plan which I have procured for the purpose.

The stream whose confluence with the Thone marks, as I before observed, the situation of King Ina's Castle, enters the outer moat at the south western corner, and is there divided into two channels, one of which proceeds towards the river in nearly a straight course, through the garden attached to the house occupied by Mr. Channon, and passing under the road through Stevens's Nursery-garden, falls into the Thone at the north western extremity of the slight elevation on which the Castle was built. The

defences on this side, with the exception of a mass of masonry, evidently of ancient date, at the south western corner, and another small fragment at the north side of the western gate, through which the road now leading to Wilton runs, are totally destroyed and their situation marked only by the remains of the internal agger, which was probably crowned as at Castle Rising, Cardiff, and elsewhere, by a battlemented and looped wall of moderate elevation. At the bottom of the slope between the Winchester Arms Inn and Stevens's garden, the labourers employed a few years ago in constructing a deep drain, dug up part of several large beams; these were probably the remains of a wooden barbican situated as usual outside the moat, defending the approach to the western gate, and itself commanded by the interior defences of the gate, which probably consisted of a gate house with flanking towers, all vestiges of which have, however, totally disappeared. From the south-west angle, the moat extended towards the east nearly at right angles, to the course of the brook, between the school-house and the yard of the Old Angel Inn, as far as the present Market, where it turned to the north and proceeded in nearly a straight line under the stables of Pattison's Hotel, and at the back of the houses on the western side of North Street, and joined the river, or rather mill stream, a little above the town mills. Of the defences of this side of the Castle nothing remains until we come to the eastern gate, where, though sadly disfigured by modern additions, stand the very striking remains of a very strong and handsome gate-house, the erection of which has usually been ascribed to Bishop Langton, his arms being carved on a stone inserted in the western front of the building, but which I have no hesitation in referring to the Edwardian period. Not only



TAUNTON CASTLE,

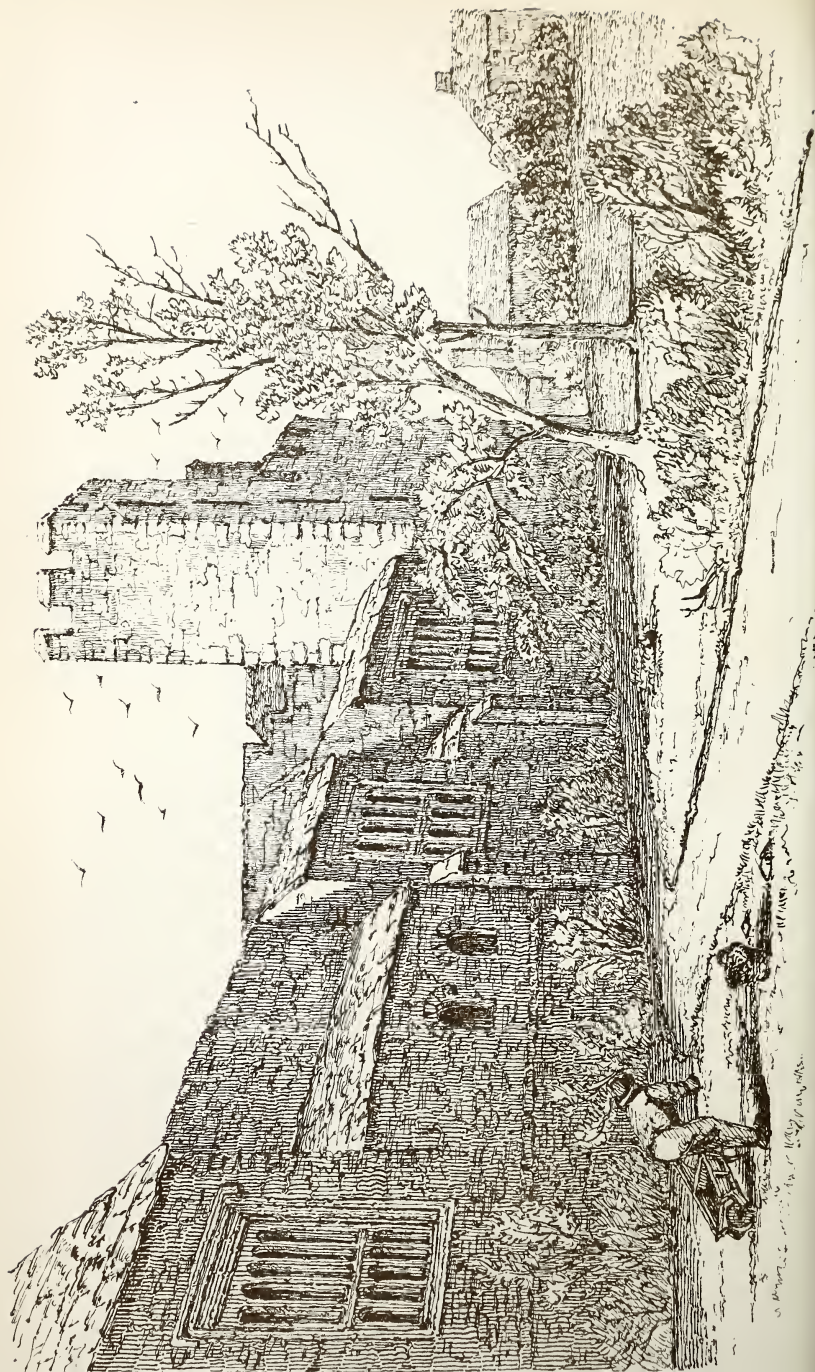
North View of the Eastern Gate.

Engraved by W. F. Elliott, J. R. S.
From a Sketch by

are the mouldings plain massive chamfers, quite dissimilar to those of the fifteenth century used in some parts of the Castle, but the arch and the whole character of the building, as well as the windows of the chamber north of gate (now destroyed, but well represented in some old drawings which have been shewn me), are decidedly such as to lead to the conclusion that the gate-house is not later than the time of Edward III., and probably earlier than even the reign of that monarch. At this point, outside the moat, were discovered, a short time since, the foundations of some strong stone fabric; either those of a barbican, which was sometimes, though rarely, constructed of masonry, or of walls leading to the drawbridge and confining the approach to a narrow passage commanded by the gate-house; an arrangement not uncommon in Castles of the Edwardian type. On the north side, the marshy ground, the river Thone, and the ancient mill stream passing nearly close to the Castle walls, rendered any other moat quite unnecessary. At a short distance below the junction of the brook with the mill stream, at the corner of Stevens's garden, a second moat opens upon the water, and extending round the buildings now in use, joins the external moat at the back of the Castle Inn. Whether this moat was ever deeper than it now is admits of a doubt, as there appears to have been a sort of platform on the interior side of the great moat, leading to an outwork at the north-eastern extremity of the place, nearly on a level with the bottom of the interior moat, which may perhaps mark its original depth before the construction of the outer defences; but it probably was deeper, for Sir Benjamin Hammet is said to have expended a large sum in laying out the grounds and filling up the moat, which on the western and southern sides is now occupied by gardens.

Immediately within the moat the south-eastern corner of the enclosure is occupied by an elevated rectangular platform, the sides of which, in the garden attached to Mr. Dyer's house, were, within a very few months, marked by masses of masonry, which have now given place to raspberry bushes ; while that towards the moat displayed a face of undoubted Norman masonry, which has also disappeared before the unsparing march of modern improvements. From this platform a high agger extends to the north-eastern corner, where stands a mount commanding the outwork before mentioned, and the approach to the ancient mills ; while along the front, defended by the mill stream, masses of very solid masonry may still be seen, but in so mutilated a condition as to defy any attempt at accurate description.

At the distance of more than twelve hundred years it would be manifestly absurd to expect any remains of a building constructed at a time when *getymbrian* was the word used to express building of any kind, fortifications included ; but it is probable that this interior moat marks the exact site of the Castle built by Ina, and destroyed soon after by his sister, as it follows the form of the ground, and encloses the highest part of the elevated spot at the confluence of the brook with the Thone. That the platform at the south-east angle was the site of the Norman rectangular keep, does not admit of a doubt ; while the mount at the north-eastern extremity was probably one of those so often met with in Norman fortifications, though the arch in its northern side, leading into the outwork before mentioned, is evidently of later date. Whether the Norman Castle extended farther to the west than the masses of masonry, before mentioned, may be doubtful, but I am inclined to think that the base court occupied the whole area included



Cauntun Castle—North Front.

within the inner moat; and that much of the walls now remaining, are Norman, though modernized and adapted to the improved system of fortification introduced by Edward I. Immediately to the west of Mr. Dyer's premises, flanked by an enormous mass of ruined masonry, is a way leading at once to the mill stream, through a door-way having a segmental arch, which may perhaps be as early as the latter part of the thirteenth century, beyond which extends a wall of very great thickness, having flat buttresses of a very Norman-like appearance, which I believe to have been the original curtain surrounding the base court of the Norman Castle. This wall now forms the north side of the great hall which has been built against it inside, and has been cut through to give space for the insertion of the large square-headed windows of the sixteenth century, by which the hall is now lighted. This hall is generally supposed to have been built by Bishop Horne, in the latter part of the sixteenth century, his arms,* with the date, 1577, being carved on a stone built into the wall of the room now used by the grand jury. But this building is evidently an addition to it, and though the height of the hall, rising as it does considerably above the external defences, gives reason to suppose that it was constructed in comparatively peaceful times, yet the high pitch of the original roof, which is still to be seen against the square turret which rises at its western extremity, induces me to think that it is of considerably earlier date, and if not of the Edwardian period, together with the tower which contains a staircase of communication between the hall and the upper story of the western buildings of the inner bailey, more likely to be the work of Bishop Langton, in the fifteenth century,

* Partè per Pale, Winchester and Horne.

than of Bishop Horne, in the sixteenth. Whether the building composing the western side of the inner bailey of the Edwardian Castle be originally Norman, or no, (which from the immense thickness of the walls, as well as from a letter of Sir Benjamin Hammet, in which he says he has converted a Saxon arch into an apartment, I am inclined to believe it was) the ashler work of lancet windows still apparent in both external and internal walls, which can hardly be later than the end of the thirteenth or the beginning of the fourteenth centuries, as well as the circular towers at the angle, leave no doubt that if not built from the ground they were modernized and adapted to the system of fortification in use during that period. The entrance into this inner bailey was through an embattled gate-tower, which, from the inscription and arms upon two stones in its south front, has been ascribed to Bishop Langton. But this stone is clearly not in situ, and though the mouldings of the internal arch of the gateway are such as were commonly used in the fifteenth century, those of the outer arch are plain bold chamfers. This, as well as the shape of the arch itself, which may well be as early as the thirteenth century, leads me to believe that the gate-tower is an Edwardian addition to the base court of the Norman edifice, which Langton probably repaired and faced on the inside with ashler work, moulded according to the taste prevalent during the period in which he lived.

If I be right in supposing this gate-house to be of early English or early decorated date, there is at its western junction with the other buildings of the south front, a piece of construction which strongly corroborates my idea that the walls of, at least, part of the inner bailey, are Norman. I find that the buttress of the lower building, which is flat and of very Norman-like construction is carried up

close to, and flush with, the front of the gate-house, which is evidently a later addition to the other buildings of the south front. To the east of the gate-house, a building, very similar in character to that on the west, extends nearly to the south-western angle of the platform on which I suppose the Norman keep to have stood. It is without buttresses, the masonry very coarse and irregular, being little better than rubble work, and decidedly unlike that of the round tower which flanked its eastern extremity, little more than the foundation of which now exists. Immediately within the wall stands the house occupied by Mr. Dyer, apparently a building of the fifteenth century, but probably containing portions of much earlier date. The school-house, also, founded by Bishop Fox in the year 1522, stands immediately within the southern ramparts of the Castle, and is a very excellent specimen of the domestic architecture of the beginning of the sixteenth century.

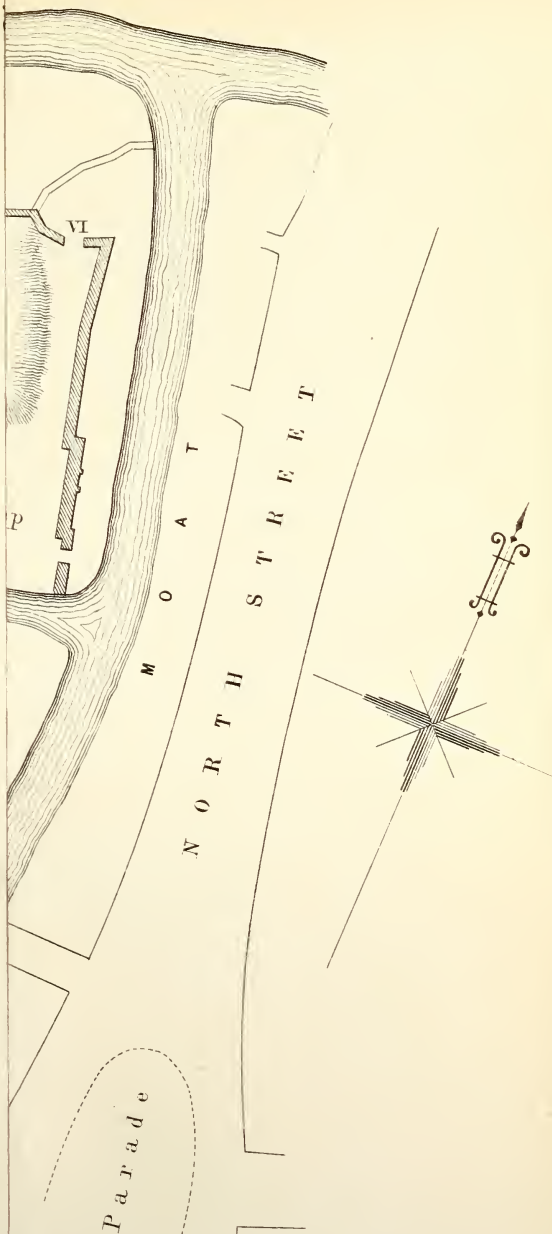
This is all that I have been able to trace of perhaps the most important of the nine castles which are known to have existed in this county ; and I feel that I ought to apologize for having occupied your time with so meagre and unsatisfactory a series of conjectures ; for in truth they are little more. It is now generally allowed by architectural antiquaries, that it is almost impossible accurately to determine the date, even of ecclesiastical edifices, merely by the style of the architecture, without the aid of documentary evidence ; and if the difficulty be great when the strict rules of ecclesiastical architecture kept in order the exuberant fancies of the builder, it is very much increased in the case of domestic and castellated fabrics, where these rules were much relaxed and varied to suit the convenience of the inhabitants and the circumstances of the locality.

Of this aid I have been almost entirely destitute, my only guides having been the mutilated buildings which still remain, and the analogy of other Castles which have suffered less from modern utilitarianism and senseless want of taste. My conclusions, therefore, are little better than conjectures, but such as they are they may perhaps be the means of at least recording what still remains of a very important Castle, of which, as I mentioned at the beginning of my paper, many of the most interesting features are, even now in the act of passing away for ever.

August 31st, 1853.

REFERENCE TO THE PLAN.

- I. Entrance to inner Bailey.
 - II. Interior of Gate repaired by Bp. Langton.
 - III. Way leading to Mill-stream.
 - IV. Stair-turret, between hall and upper floor of western buildings.
 - V. Mass of masonry in Mr. Channon's garden.
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The Site of GANNON CASTLE



Ino Liversedge Surveyor
Taunton.

Published by Frederick May, Taunton.

The Church of St. Mary the Virgin, at Kingston.

BY THE REV. ECCLES JAMES CARTER.

THE subject which I propose to bring before the meeting this evening, is the Church of St. Mary the Virgin, at Kingston.

When I first undertook to read a Paper before this Society, I never had the privilege of attending any of its meetings, but having now been present at the last one, I feel that an apology is due from me for occupying the time of this assembly with so very meagre a production as constant parochial occupation enables me to present. Having heard the scientific and elaborate Paper on Steeples in general, read at the last meeting by my friend Mr. Petit, illustrated with a profusion of drawings in that style, for which, I think I may say without paying a bad compliment to any artist, that he stands unrivalled ; and having heard, also, as much as time permitted me of that very learned discussion on (to my ignorance) the most mysterious of all subjects, the Egyptian Hieroglyphics, by a gentleman

whose very name every lover of ancient music must hold in nothing short of veneration, I certainly felt that anything I could produce would be very unworthy the attention of an assembly accustomed to be entertained by such deeply edifying effusions as these. Still I have persevered in my intention of bringing the subject I proposed before this meeting, and I have done so because I conceive that such an association as the present, is as a vast river to receive the tributary streams, however insignificant in themselves, of the surrounding district, and to waft the general influence of these to places which otherwise would be unaffected by them.

I presume, also, that it is of great importance that a record of the actual state of any monument, at a given time, and especially of churches, should exist in some central depository, and be accessible to persons who may have an interest in such objects. And although the general and more scientific papers will be the most interesting, yet the dry detailed account of individual churches may, after all, prove the most valuable. From no little experience and observation on such subjects, I have good reason to know that the account of a church, or, indeed, of any public monument, requiring restoration, is seldom read without good effect, and I might add that it very rarely happens that any general interest can be excited in the cause without some detailed account being brought, in this manner, before the public.

I have, therefore, as I said, persevered in my intention to bring forward the subject of this Paper, though I confess most sincerely that I am almost ashamed to bring it forward in so superficial a manner as I am now compelled to do, from want of time to devote myself to this special object, which, to handle properly, requires the investigation of

many books and documents to which I have been unable to gain access.

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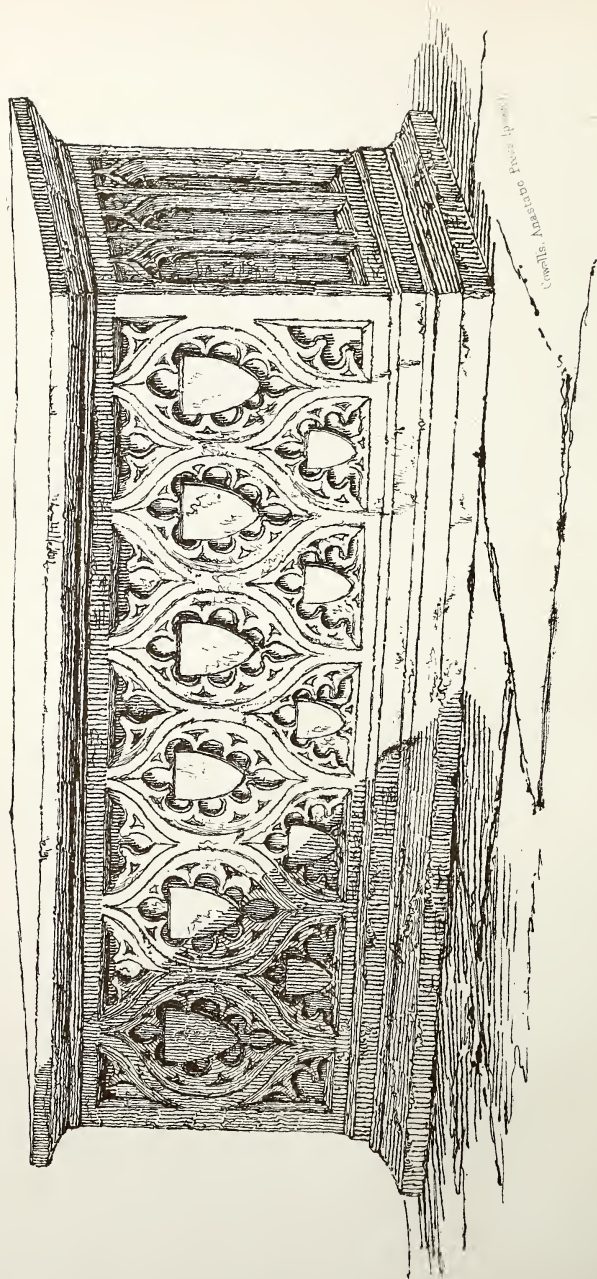
The village of Kingston is situated about three miles north of Taunton, on the south side of the Quantock Hills. The Church, which is dedicated to St. Mary the Virgin, stands on a slight eminence on the right, about 150 yards from the high road to Bridgwater. Its tower is an object of attraction to most passers by, and the Church appears to be generally characterized as a beautiful one, from the impression, no doubt, that it is in keeping and accordance with the tower. Leaving the tower for the present, I cannot say that any part of the Church (saving, perhaps, the porch and bench ends) presents an appearance worthy the appellation of beautiful, but it contains some curious and many interesting features, and if rescued from the effects of modern barbarity, and restored to its pristine condition, might perhaps vie with most parish churches in this district. It is dedicated, as I have said, to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and contains a chancel 32 feet 2 inches long, by 17 feet 7 inches wide; a nave 40 feet 7 inches long, by 18 feet 4 inches wide; a chancel aisle, on the south side, running the whole length of the chancel; a north and south aisle to the nave, a porch on the south side, and a western tower.

Having no documents to refer to, I cannot profess to give dates, for the more one studies such subjects the more convinced one is that attempting to assign accurate dates from the style of the features in the buildings, without documents, is a very dangerous experiment. As to the point which has been so much mooted of late days, of architectural nomenclature, I shall content myself, on the present occasion, with using the old terms of Rickman, without meaning any disparagement to those which have been since invented.

The chancel, then, is clearly a Perpendicular erection. The east window is of that style of five lights, containing twelve small compartments in the tracery; on the north side are two windows of three lights each, and on the south one of the same character as the east one, and bearing that usual want of proportion to the chancel so commonly to be found in Perpendicular work, and which, in my humble opinion, renders every chancel containing it perfectly ugly. A barbarous oak panelled wainscoting runs round the whole walls above the altar steps, and prevents, at present, the discovery of any of the usual appurtenances of the altar, found in ancient Churches. The platform on which the altar stands, is raised two steps above the level of the chancel, and the chancel again one step above the floor of the nave.

The west end of the chancel, on the north side, is opened to the north aisle by a Perpendicular arch, and it is plain that the east end of the north aisle was used as a chapel. The whole pillar supporting the eastern side of this arch, and forming the respond, has been cut away, except the capital, which, with its corresponding cap, contains the ordinary Perpendicular embellishments of foliage and shields.

The South side opens by an arcade of three Perpendicular arches into the south aisle, which contains a small door, of the same style, in the north angle of the east wall, no doubt used by the chantry priest who performed the usual services in this chapel. There is in the south wall at the east end, a small aumbry, which clearly proves the former existence of an altar. There is some variation in the caps of these pillars, and also of the moulding of the pillars themselves. The two caps to the east are perfectly plain, but the next one consists of the body of a man bearing the capital on his shoulders (as far as my observa-



Tomb of the Warren of Westerrumbe.

tion has gone, rather an unusual feature in Perpendicular work, in the position it is placed.) The other caps contain the usual pateræ of this style. The two pillars supporting the easternmost arch vary, there being a kind of swell chamfer between the three quarter columns, whereas the lower pillars contain hollows between the columns; and on the west side of the first pillar there is a bracket with foliage, which was either placed there to receive offerings, or, it may be, held an image or a light, but from its construction I incline to the former opinion. It is remarkable also, that the caps are not all on the same level.*

The grand feature of this aisle is a splendid tomb belonging to the family of the Warres, of Hestercombe. It is covered with a slab of Purbeck marble, 9 feet 6 inches long, by 4 feet 6 inches wide, moulded on the under edges. The sides of the tomb are composed of Ham-hill stone, divided into six compartments of shields, held between the cusps of flowing tracery. These shields have been emblazoned with the arms of the Warres, and their connections, the tinctures in some places being still visible. The height of the tomb is 3 feet 10 inches. From the style of this tomb I should be disposed to assign a date not later than the middle of the third Edward's reign; and if this be correct, then it is clear that is more ancient than the aisle in which it stands. Still the points of the cusps appear more Perpendicular than Decorated in style, and there may be just causes of doubt whether the tomb is as early as its general appearance leads one to suspect. The

* Since the above was written, the yellow wash has been removed from these pillars and arches, and it is plain that the easternmost arch has been added since the lower ones, which accounts for the variation observable. A solid wall, no doubt reached as far as the second pillar, the western half of which formed the respond, and it was most probably opened to the chancel to give a view of the great altar from the chapel.

position of this tomb is somewhat remarkable, being neither in the centre of the aisle nor under an arch ; and it would appear that the aisle has been widened, which has thrown the tomb and the arch leading into the Tetton aisle, out of the centre.

There is a two-light Perpendicular window in this aisle, with a very Decorated cut about it, and placed in a position which appears something like a recess in the wall. The other window is the same as those on the north and south sides of the aisle,—large four-light windows, thoroughly debased, without any tracery or cusping whatever in the head.*

In descending from the chancel to the nave, we miss that grand feature, a nave arch, without which it seems hardly possible to imagine a correctly formed Church. The defect, we know, was supplied by the Perpendicular builders, by the substitution of those splendid screens of this style, many of which still remain ; but this feature has, alas, been destroyed here, and a screen, probably of the date of George I., which did stand there, was removed some twenty years ago to the back of the gallery, where it now stands ! The nave is divided from the aisles by an arcade of four arches of Early English date, supported by three cylindrical pillars, eighteen inches in diameter, and two responds. On examining the two eastern responds, where the Early English and Perpendicular work join, it appears that

* Since the above was written, the south aisle of the chancel, beyond all doubt originally a Chapel of the Warres, has been appropriated by faculty, with the consent of the rectors, to the occupiers of Hestercombe, for the use of themselves, their tenants, and dependants residing in the parish of Kingston. The hideous four-light window has been removed, and a two-light, after the pattern of the one existing, put in its place. Part of the wall has been rebuilt, and a new roof is in process of construction, the old one being thoroughly decayed and unsafe.

the Early English part was not the original termination of that part of the Church, as there is more than the half pillar, which leads to the supposition that the Early English nave extended farther east than it does at present, and, indeed, the whole arrangement of this part of the Church is more incomplete than Early English builders were wont to leave their work. The caps of these pillars vary in design, but contain nothing but plain mouldings. The bases contain a fine specimen of the "water mould." The material of these pillars and bases appears to be a very hard sand stone, of a greenish and reddish tint, but the taste of former days has covered them with a coating of paint, to imitate green and white marble, while those in the chancel, composed of Ham-hill stone, are covered with yellow ochre, as are all the windows. The whole of the walls are plastered and white-washed, and the whole masonry of the exterior is bedaubed with a coat of rough cast, which destroys the whole effect of the building, and of course, prevents the discovery of the date of the walls. The two westernmost bays of the south aisle are appropriated to, and kept in repair by, the owner of the Tetton property, and are commonly called the Tetton aisle, and are divided from the aisle by a Perpendicular arch running across it from north to south, the arch which was before mentioned as being thrown out of centre by the supposed widening of this aisle.

At the south side of the westernmost bay but one, is situated the porch, which is partly internal, and contains a beautiful specimen of fan tracery vaulting, springing from engaged columns in the four corners of the porch. The column in the north eastern angle is cut away and corbelled off, no doubt to admit of a stoop, which may still be concealed under the plaister. The internal doorway of this

porch has a depressed four centred arch, and over it is a niche, with a sort of coronet canopy, which, no doubt, contained the figure of the Saint of the dedication.

At the west end of the nave is a lofty gallery, arranged, as well as may be, to represent a scene at the back of the stage of a theatre, and this blocks up one of the boldest features in the Church, the tower arch, which opens into the tower, and, if open, would give a view of a fine Perpendicular western window. The mouldings of the arch are very bold, and, as near as can be ascertained, continuous.

The ground floor of the tower is covered with staircase to the gallery, clock case, and closet for rubbish of all descriptions, and gives the usual evidence of the *moral evil* of blocking off any part of the Church, to say nothing of the destruction of all proportion. The north aisle is filled with hideous high pews in which, at least one third of the accommodation which might be obtained for worshippers is lost, and we have some valuable specimens of these enormities in the Church, in the south aisle, as well as at the west-end of the nave.* The roofs also sadly disfigure the Church, being all of them plastered and white-washed. Though the nave and south aisle show the longitudinal and transverse ribs of the timber roof, but these are covered with blue paint. The roofs themselves appear to be of the cradle kind, so common in these parts. In the nave roof are four dormer windows of modern date, which are not only a sad desight, but are a great evil in

* A faculty has been obtained, since this account was drawn up, in accordance with the resolution of vestry, for the removal of all these pews, and the funds are alone wanting for carrying it into effect. Any contributions towards this good work, forwarded to the vicar, will be very thankfully received. The pews in the chancel have been removed since the appropriation of the south chancel aisle to the Hesterecombe property.

construction from their weakening the roof, and exposing part of it unnecessarily to the weather.

There remains yet one feature to be noticed in the interior, though it would take a very long time to describe it, in the bench-ends and fronts of the stall work. The carving of these, is for the most part deep, and very elaborate, and some of the designs very chaste and beautiful. These have also suffered, though from good intention, by being varnished; whereby the whole artistic effect of the carving, in the play of light and shade is destroyed. If any one has any doubts about this fact, they may be convinced within an hour, by taking a survey of those in Kingston Church, and then going on to the adjoining Church at Broomfield, where the beautiful ends remain in their primitive integrity. There is one astounding difficulty, however, to be accounted for by surveying Kingston alone, and that is how the taste of any age could have so degenerated as to have induced or allowed persons to destroy a whole aisle of these costly relics, to put up those evidences of pride exclusiveness and bad taste yclept pews.

The Font of good Perpendicular design, stands at the west side of the last pillar in the north aisle, but it has been treated with no greater respect than the pillars.

I fear I have exhausted the patience of my hearers before coming to that feature which most persons would examine first, perhaps to the exclusion of all others. I must yet detain you one minute longer, to mention the only piece of masonry which has not suffered from the barbarism and mendacity of rough cast, the south porch. The front of this contains some fine sculpture in niches, alas empty, and in the pierced parapet of quatrefoils, and there are also some bold corbel figures at the angles of the cornice, after the manner of Gurgoyles.

To come at last, then, to the tower, I believe I must content myself on the present occasion with giving a general opinion, that it is one of the most correct and classical of its date in this neighbourhood, though I confess myself quite unequal to the task of drawing a comparison between it and other towers of this style. I believe, also, that detailed accounts of these towers, written by a much abler hand, have been read before this Society, and no doubt that of such a tower as Kingston has been included amongst them.

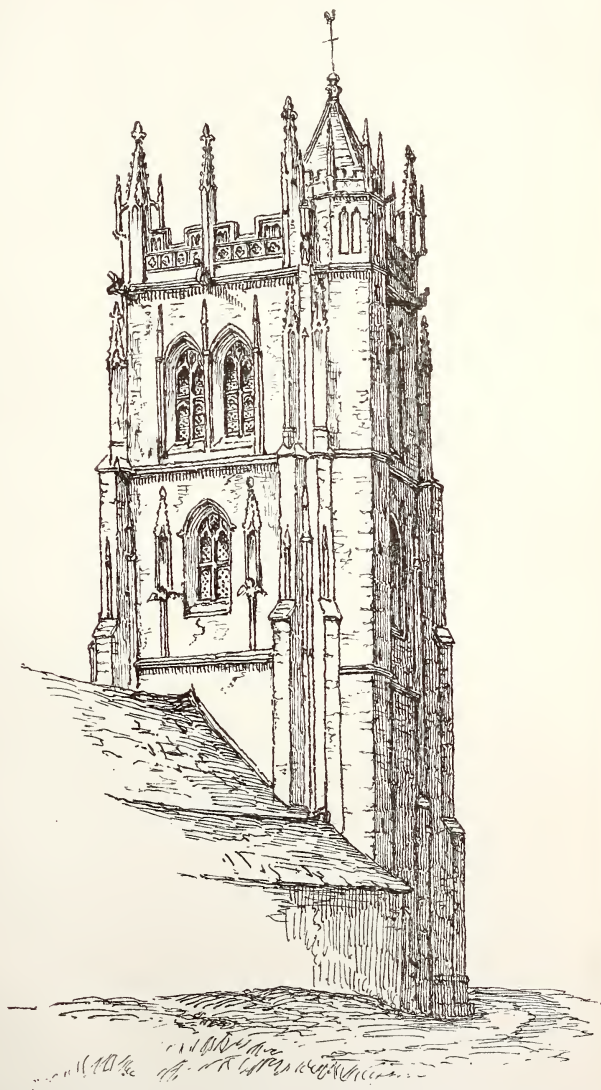
There is, as I imagine, rather a peculiar feature in its construction, inasmuch as its breadth from north to south exceeds its length from east to west. This plan was probably adopted to suit the width of the Early English nave.

It consists of three stages, the angles being supported by bold square buttresses, surmounted with pinnacles, which disengage themselves at the bottom of the blocking course of the gorgeous parapet which crowns the whole.

In the second stage there is one window on each face, with niches, supported by angel brackets on either side of them, except on the north side, where the window is plain, the space being occupied by the staircase turret which stands at the north east angle, and is terminated in a conical cap.

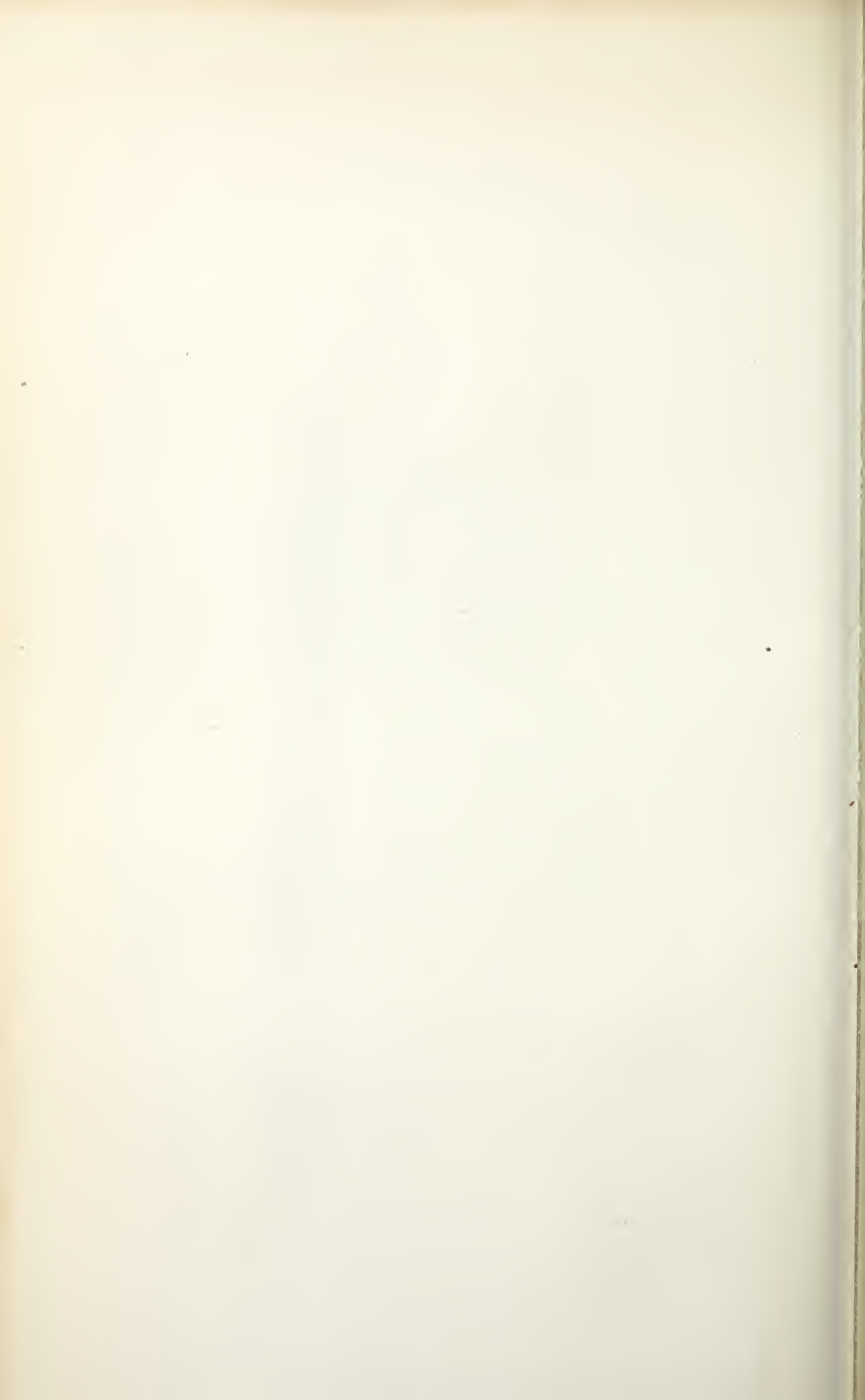
The third stage contains the bell chamber, where are six bells of good tone, one of them being a black letter bell. There are two windows on the east, south, and west sides of this stage and but one on the north, for the reason before assigned.

The parapet is turreted and battlemented and has a pinnacle at each angle, from which are bracketed out four flying pinnacles from the level of the cap moulding, and not from the base of the parapet, as is usually the case.



COWELL'S ANASTATIC PRESS, IPSWICH.

Tower of the Church of St. Mary, Ringstun.



The whole arrangement gives that net work appearance to the parapet, which, I believe, may fairly be characterized as the "Gloucester battlement," the tower of Gloucester Cathedral forming, as I imagine, the type of all the Somersetshire towers of this character, and intended, doubtless, by their pious builders, to lead our minds upwards from these material and perishable structures to that Temple not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Langport, the Llongborth of Llywarch
Hên's Elegy, and the Site of an ancient
British Town of the same name.

BY THE REV. WM. ARTHUR JONES, M.A.

IN the "Elegy upon Geraint ab Erbyn,"* by the Prince-poet, Llywarch Hên, Geraint, the Prince of Dyvnaint, or Devon, is represented as having been slain in the battle of LLONGBORTH. It would appear from the elegy, that the poet was himself present at the engagement, and witnessed the death of his friend and fellow-warrior. The British forces were commanded by Arthur, under the title of Emperor. The name of the Saxon leader does not occur in the poem, but there is reason to believe it was Cerdic, whose progress was so vigorously opposed, on various occasions, by the British chieftain.

The engagement was fierce and bloody. This is evident from the following extracts ; and the whole poem clearly

* The same Geraint ab Erbyn is the hero of one of the Mabinogion, edited by Lady Charlotte Guest. He was the cousin of King Arthur ; his father, Erbyn, being the brother of Uther Pendragon.

implies that it was a drawn battle, in which all the forces of the contending parties were engaged :

“ Yn Llongborth gwelais drydar,
Ac elorawr yn ngwyar,
A gwyr rhudd rhag rhuthr esgar.

“ Yn Llongborth gwelais i vrithred
Gwyr ynghyd, a gwaed ar draed ;
‘ A vo gwyr i Eraint, brysied !’

“ Yn Llongborth y llàs Geraint,
Gwr dewr o goettir Dyvnaint,
Wyntwy yn lladd gyd a’s lleddaint.

“ Yn Llongborth llàs i Arthur
Gwyr dewr, cymmynynt a dur ;
Ammherawdyr, llywiawdyr, llavur.

“ At Llongborth I witnessed the noisy tumult,
And biers with the dead drenched in gore,
And men blood-stained from the onset of the foe.

“ At Llongborth I saw the hurried rush,
Of men with feet blood-stained,
(Crying) ‘ Haste ! ye that be Geraint’s men.’

“ At Llongborth was Geraint slain,
The bold warrior of the Woodlands of Dyvnaint,
Slaughtering the foe as he fell.

“ At Llongborth was slain to Arthur,
Emperor and conductor of the toil of war,
Valorous men, who with steel hewed down (their foes.)”

The site of this battle has been usually assigned to Portsmouth. Dr. Owen Pugh, who published the elegy with a translation, in 1792, represents Llongborth to be “ some harbour on the south coast, probably Portsmouth.”

Mr. Turner, likewise, in his "History of the Anglo-Saxons," considers "this poem as describing the conflict at Portsmouth, when Porta landed."* M. de la Ville-marqué, the distinguished Breton antiquarian, advocates the same opinion.

With all due deference to these high authorities, I would submit that there are considerations of great weight derived from the physical characteristics of the locality ; from incidents mentioned in the poem ; and from the knowledge we have of the relative position sustained, about that time, by the Cymri and the Saxons, which go far to prove that the battle, celebrated by Llywarch Hên, was fought at Langport, in this county, and not at Portsmouth. If this conclusion prove to be well-founded, it follows that Langport occupies the site, and still bears the name of the ancient British town of Llongborth, and that it was a port of some importance, during, if not before, the time of the Roman occupation.

The Celtic *Llongborth*, is compounded of LLONG, a ship ; and PORTH, a haven ; and signifies a port or haven for ships. It is well known that Celtic names of places are, invariably, descriptive. Hence the necessity of ascertaining whether the site of the present town of Langport could ever have answered to the description involved in the word Llongborth. If it did, then the æstuary now confined (mainly by means of artificial embankments) to Bridgwater Bay, must at one time have extended towards Langport, making that place easily accessible to such vessels as the foreign traders and the inhabitants of the land at that time possessed. Similar, if not greater, changes have taken place in the coast-line of this country, even within the period of historic record.

* His. Ang. Sax., b. iii., c. 3.

The Greek Geographer, Claudius Ptolemæus, deemed the mouth of the river Axe, at Seaton, of sufficient importance to be named in succession with the æstuaries of the Tamar, the Exe, and Portsmouth.* In the present day, the mouth of the river is hardly wider than the vessels which enter through it into the little harbour within. A great bank of shingle, which Leland says was beginning to form in his time, now stretches quite across what was the mouth of the æstuary, and rich pasture lands extend over the flats formerly covered by the sea.

From the Saxon chronicle, we learn that in the year 449, Hengist and Horsa "landed in Britain on the shore which is called *Ypwinsfleet*." Ebbs-fleet, however, is now an inland spot, at some distance from the sea; and what was the æstuary of the Wanstum, dividing the Isle of Thanet from the main land of Kent, is a shallow brook, although it was once navigable for ships of large burden; and, even in Bede's time, was three stadia broad, and fordable only in two places.†

With such examples of great physical changes elsewhere; and considering that Langport is still within reach of the tidal waters; it is not too much to assume, that it might, thirteen centuries ago, have been a haven for ships.

In Porth-Kery, on the other side of the Severn, and, almost opposite Bridgwater Bay, we have a similar instance of the elevation of the sea-bed. Porth-Kery was a sea-

* μετὰ τὸ Ὀκρινον ἄκρον, — Ταμαρον ποτ. ; Ἰσάκα ποτ. ; Ἀλαίνου ποτ. ἐκβολαὶ ; Μεγας λιμήν. κ. τ. λ.

Excerpta de Brit. ex. Scriptoris Græcis. p. xiii. Monumenta Hist. Britannica.

† Bedæ Hist. Eccles., Lib. I., c. 25.

. . . . a continenti terra secernit fluvius Vantsumu, qui est latitudinis circiter trium stadiorum, et duobus tantum in locis transmeabilis: . .

port of the ancient district of Siluria, frequented by *Keri*, the Sovereign of that district, and a distinguished naval commander. It is now utterly inadequate for the accommodation of shipping. Evidence of the gradual rise of the bed of the æstuary of the Severn, has likewise been afforded by excavations in the Bute Docks, Cardiff; and at Port Talbot, in Glamorganshire, "where ancient harbour conveniences were discovered at considerable depths below the present surfaces."*

The Geological features of the alluvial deposits in the extensive plains on either side of the Poldon hills; the various objects, natural and artificial, which have been found in different places, and at great depths, afford conclusive evidence of similar changes on the English coast of the Bristol Channel.

Thus, we find as far up as Weston Zoyland, Chedzoy, and Middlezoy, which stand upon red-marl prominences slightly raised above the level of the surrounding marshes, banks of sea-sand resting against these slightly elevated lands, in such a way as most clearly to show that they formed the margin of ancient sea-boundaries. In these sand banks, are found the shells of the very same molluscs, which are commonly picked up on our sea shores, and are now living on our coasts; proving the deposit to have belonged to a very recent period.† The same features present themselves at Huntspill, Pawlet, and at Chilton Trinity, near Bridgwater; which would indicate the boundaries of the æstuary on either side. At Chilton, the sand containing the shells, lies at a depth of about two or three feet below the surface of the soil.

* Iolo MSS. note p. 345.

† Mr. Baker's paper on the Geology of Somerset, Proc. of Society, 1849-50, p. 136.

The bulk of the alluvial deposit in this district, consists of a bluish clay, and sea-silt. Those who have seen in how short a space of time the worked-out clay-pits about Bridgwater are filled up, by the subsidence of the muddy waters admitted from the river Parret, will not be at a loss to comprehend the character of the agencies which, in the course of centuries, would cause a considerable elevation in the surface of the plain throughout.

In a paper on the "formation of Marsh Peat" (read at the *Conversazione* of the Society at Taunton, January 24, 1853,) by the Rev. W. Phelps, it is stated that "on the banks of the Parret, near Crandon Bridge, the alluvial deposit is from eight to ten feet deep, over the peat; and in digging the foundation for the new bridge at Burrow Bridge, in 1828, the alluvial deposit was 16 feet, and the peat 14 feet in thickness, resting on a bed of marl." Half the rise in the level at Burrow Bridge, so clearly proved by the observations recorded by Mr. Phelps, would be quite enough to account for all the physical conditions which our hypothesis requires.

That these deposits have taken place to some extent, and for a considerable depth, within a comparatively recent period, and during the time that the surrounding country was inhabited by the human race, is very evident from the character of the various objects which have, from time to time, been discovered in the clay-pits and turf-moors.

Mr. Stradling in his valuable paper on the Turbaries,* gives an interesting account of the different antiques discovered by him, in what he styles the bottom of "the Lake," whose waters reached up to Glastonbury. Among those things, evidently of British origin, besides flint-spears, and Celts, he mentions three oars or paddles,

* Vide The Society's Report, for 1849-50, p. 50.

similar in form to those used in the present day by Welsh fishermen, in the management of the coracle; and, also a very large canoe formed from an immense oak, which had been preserved by the peculiar antiseptic properties of the peat, and which was known to the turf-cutters as "Squire Phippen's big ship."

These facts clearly point to a time when the eastern side of the Poldon hills was washed by the waters of a large navigable lake, if not an arm of the sea; and judging from the similarity of position, and the occurrence of somewhat similar remains, there can be no doubt but that a lake, or æstuary likewise existed, at that time, to the west of the Poldon hills, reaching towards Langport.

The trunks and branches of trees; the horns of the forest deer; the bones of the ox and horse, have been found at considerable depths in the clay-pits, in the neighbourhood of Bridgwater. At the old canal basin at Huntworth, animal remains, and even pottery were found mixed with sand, nearly 30 feet beneath the surface.*

In the collection of the late Mr. Baker, there is a curious *brass bolt* which was found in one of the clay-pits; and in the possession of John Browne, Esq., there is an interesting specimen of the gold ring-money, which was dug up at a considerable depth in the silt-deposit. These, with the remains of pottery, are a clear proof that the deposit of the alluvial flats in the district is comparatively recent; and that when the plains west of the Poldon hills constituted the bed of an æstuary, the adjoining shores were inhabited by a race of men not unacquainted with the arts, nor strangers to the use and value of the precious metals.

Those who had an opportunity of witnessing the great

* Proc. of Society, 1849-50, p. 137.

expanse of waters, which during the floods of last winter covered the flats for many miles, could easily realize to themselves the aspect of the country at the time to which we refer; and could not fail to recognize in the earthy matter brought down by inland floods, combined with drift-sand and the silt and mud deposited by the tidal waters of the Severn, causes fully adequate, in the course of centuries, to produce the elevation which has taken place.

Even the Saxon names of some of the places in the district are evidence of the same physical characteristics, and serve as a permanent record of the physical history of that part of the county. Thus we have *Weston-Zoyland*, *Chedzoy*, *Middlezoy*,* occupying those slightly elevated patches of marl before referred to, and all implying the presence of an expanse of water surrounding those localities at the time.

The few British names which have survived, afford a striking confirmation of the views we have advanced. Considering the Poldon as a promontory, standing out between two æstuaries, the one extending to Glastonbury, the other to Langport, no more descriptive name could be given to it than that it bears. *Moel-y-don*, or *y Voel-don*, easily changed into Poldon. *Moel*, in Celtic, signifies *bare*, *bald*; hence, applied, in Welsh, to *high exposed points of land*; and in Gaelic, to *promontories*. It forms an element in the name of many mountains in Wales; for example, *Moel y Famau*, *Moel Hebog*, *y Voel Goch*, *y Voel Las*, &c. In Scotland the same word appears in the *Mull* of *Kantyre*, the *Mull* of *Galloway*, &c. Here, in combination with *don*, a wave, *Voel-don*, or *Poldon*, would signify the promontory, or elevated land among the waves. Thus were the Poldon-hills called by the ancient inhabitants of

* Pronounced, Chedzee, Middlezee.

the land; and during the greater part of last winter (1852-3), when the floods were out, the name they bear would not be deemed much less appropriate, or less descriptive.*

Ynys Avallon, the name by which Glastonbury was known to the Cymri, is one which accords with the physical conditions obtaining in this district at the time when Langport, was in fact, as in name, Llongborth; a haven for ships. *Ynys Avallon*, signifies "the ISLAND abounding in apple trees;" a name peculiarly descriptive of the place, when the Turbaries were as yet in course of formation, and when the warrior's barge and the fisherman's canoe moved over what are now well-tilled fields, and where the golden harvest rises to reward the labours of the husbandman.

These considerations, I submit, remove all the difficulties which might arise from the present physical characteristics of the district, and prove it not only possible, but highly probable, that the situation of Langport, before the time of the Roman occupation, corresponded with the description involved in the name of Llongborth.

The historical question remains still to be answered :—Is Langport the Llongborth of which Llywarch Hên speaks, in the elegy?

Considering the great obscurity in which the historical events of that period are necessarily involved, the reasons which may be advanced in favour of the affirmative are, I conceive, if not altogether satisfactory, yet of great weight.

* Since this paper was read, the Rev. F. Warre has suggested that in *Bawdrip* we have a Romano-British name, still further confirmatory of the æstuary theory. *Bawdrip* stands on the edge of the alluvial deposit, and would really be what its name denotes, a *Bôd* (British), dwelling place, on the *Ripa* (Latin), bank of the æstuary.

The battle of Llongborth is not mentioned by name in any of the Saxon Chronicles, nor are the peculiar circumstances in connexion with any engagement recorded in the Chronicles, such as can be identified with those which Llywarch Hên describes. The only one which has ever been connected with this event, is that which stands recorded in the Saxon Chronicles for A.D. 501.

"This year Porta with his two sons, Bæda and Mela, came into Britain with two ships, at a place called Portsmouth. (Portep-muða.) They soon landed and slew on the spot a young Briton of very high rank."

Mr. Sharon Turner, assuming, probably, that Langport never could have been a "port" or "harbour for ships," concludes that Llongborth must have been some harbour on the south-coast; and connecting the death of Geraint with that of the young Briton of noble birth, slain at Portsmouth, he comes to the conclusion that the poem of Llywarch Hên, describes the conflict at Portsmouth when Porta landed.*

This conclusion, however, is not borne out by the circumstances of the case. The mere fact, as recorded, of their "slaying on the spot a young Briton of very high rank," falls far short of sufficient evidence, that this young Briton was Geraint ab Erbin. There can be no doubt that the life of many a British youth of highest rank was sacrificed, during that long and severe conflict.

Further, it does not appear possible, that the crew of *two ships*, (which is all that the Chronicle gives to Porta and his sons on their landing at Portsmouth,) could have offered the amount and kind of resistance, which the details of the battle in the Elegy imply. "They soon landed and slew on the spot"—is the description of a very different

* Turner's History of Angl. Saxons, vol. 1, b. iii. c. 3.

event from that which Llywarch Hên celebrates when he says ;—

“ Yn Llongborth gwelais drabludd
Ar fain, brain ar goludd,
Ac ar gràn cynran man-rudd.

“ Yn Llongborth gwelais i vygedorth,
A gwyr yn godde ammorth,
A gorvod gwedi gorborth.

“ Yn Llongborth gwelais i arvau
Gwyr, a gwyar yn dineu,
A gwedi gawr garw adneu.”

“ At Llongborth I saw hard toiling
Amidst the stones, ravens on entrails feasting,
And a crimson gash on the chieftain's brow.

“ In Llongborth I saw the smoking pile,
And men enduring want,
And defeat after the feast of plenty.

“ In Llongborth I saw the weapons,
Of heroes with gore fast dropping,
And after the war-shout, a fearful return.”

The poem abounds in pictures of this character, which it is impossible to reconcile with the event hitherto associated with the battle of Llongborth. We are thus led to the conclusion that the battle of Llongborth is one of those many engagements which must have taken place between the Saxons and the Britons, but are not recorded in any of the Saxon Chronicles.

Nor will this conclusion, I conceive, be affected by the views and reasons advanced by M. de la Villemarqué, in his

edition of the Poems of the British Bards of the Sixth Century.*

In the "argument" prefixed to the elegy, this celebrated Celtic scholar, after having referred to the coast of Cornwall as peculiarly favourable for the landing of the Saxon invaders,† adds: "It was there, in A.D. 501, that two ships, under the command of Porta, landed; and the invaders, in honour of their leader, called the place Port's Mouth, *i.e.* the harbour of Porta."

He then gives it as his opinion, that Llongborth is the same with Portsmouth; and that the young noble, slain at the landing of Porta, was Geraint ab Erbin. In confirmation of this opinion, he imagines he finds in Llongborth, a literal translation of Portsmouth; taking Llong to be a form of *Llwn* which he translates, "Mouth."‡

We pass over the geographical error of placing Portsmouth in Cornwall, which evidently arose from the assumed connexion of the event with the Cornish Prince, and merely observe that in the elegy itself, Geraint is described as a

"Warrior brave from the woodlands of Devon;" and it is well known that the *Dyvnaint* of the British, as well as the *Dumnonium* of the Romans, included a large part of West Somerset.

According to the best Welsh authorities I have been able to consult, *Llwn*, signifies the *Swallow*, the *Gullet*, and not the *Mouth*. But even though the etymology were ever so unobjectionable, the explanation of Llongborth,

* Poèmes des Bardes Bretons du VI^e Siècle, &c., par Th. Hersart de la Villemarqué. Paris, 1850.

† "Il y avait sur la côte, à la pointe de la Cornouaille, un endroit favorable aux descentes des Saxons." p. 1.

‡ "Je retrouve dans Longborth, ou plutôt Longport (comme on l'a primitivement écrit) la traduction exacte de Portes-Muthe." p. 2.

which this hypothesis involves, could not fail to prove unsatisfactory, inasmuch as it cannot, upon consideration, be thought at all probable, scarcely possible, that a British Prince, when singing the praises of his friend and companion in arms, would have adopted and translated the name which was given by their enemies to the place where he fell, to do honour to his foe.

Surely there must have been a British name for the harbour of Portsmouth before the landing of Porta; and that, whatever it might have been, would be used by Llywarch Hên on this occasion, and not the translation of a Saxon name. Portsmouth is undoubtedly the *Μέγας λιμὴν* of Claudius Ptolemæus; the Portus Magnus of the Romans. The first part of the word is, evidently, connected with the harbour, and not with the name of the Saxon invader.

A strong argument in favour of Langport as the site of the ancient British town of Llongborth, is presented in the fact that there is no other place in the kingdom whose name so closely resembles it in sound.* And as we have seen that, at one time, it might have been a harbour for ships, the two names are identical, not only in sound, but likewise in signification.

Standing as it did, according to our hypothesis, on the extreme end of an æstuary, it would be at least within sight of the foaming waters of the rushing tides of the Severn, and its position would thus agree with the only other reference to the death of Geraint, in the literature of that period. It occurs towards the close of the

* In Domesday Book it occurs in the form of *Lanporth*, and on one of the coins of Athelstane, LONPORT. Vide the Rev. T. F. Dymock's Paper on Somersetshire Coins, in the Pro. of the Soc., 1849-50. p. 16.

Gododin of Aneurin, another Welsh Bard of the sixth century.

“Gereint rac deheu gawr a dodet,
Lluch gwynn dwll ar ysgwyt,
Yor yspar llary yor.”

“Geraint in the south* raised the shout of war,
At the foaming (or glistening) Loch was the buckler
pierced,
Of the lord of the spear—the gentle lord.

Here *Lluch* would stand for the æstuary of the Parret, as *Loch* still does for some of the æstuaries opening out of the larger æstuary of the Clyde.

Another argument in favour of Langport as the site of the battle of Llongborth, may be drawn from its position on the confines of the district of Dyvnaint. Supposing the engagement to have taken place subsequently to that of Mynydd Badon, near Bath, this would have been a likely place for the conflict.

According to Mr. Sharon Turner, the battle of Badon Hill, the greatest and most celebrated achievement of Arthur, served only to check the progress of Cerdic. The Saxon was still permitted to retain his settlement in Wessex, and some of the chronicles quoted by Mr. Turner, shew that “after many severe conflicts, Arthur conceded to the Saxons, the counties of Southampton and Somerset; the latter, however, still contested.”†

Hence it would seem probable that the engagement to which the elegy relates, was one of those in which they contended for the occupation of this part of Somerset; for

* Aneurin was a North Briton, to whom this part of the West of England would be known as the South.

† Turner's Hist. Ang. Sax., b. iii., c. iii., p. 269.

although, according to the *Historia Britonum* of Nennius, the battle of Badon Hill stands as the last of the twelve great battles of Arthur, we find it described as the “*last, almost,*” in the history of Gildas.*

The battle of Badon Hill, according to the *Annales Cambriæ*,† took place, A.D. 516; the battle of Camlan, in which Arthur was mortally wounded, A.D. 537. This would give A.D. 520, or thereabouts, for the date of the battle of Llongborth.

This is the nearest approximation we are able to make to the date of the engagement to which the elegy relates. The fierce endurance and daring hardihood manifested, indicates a struggle for national existence. The actions recorded are those of men fighting almost at their own doors in defence of their households. Such would be the case with the men of Dyvnaint, at Langport; hence we find the battle-cry in the thick of the fray, was, “Haste! ye that be Geraint’s men!”

The issue of the engagement was doubtful; we cannot regard it as a decided victory on either side. Judging, however, from such expressions as these—

“In Llongborth I saw the smoking pile:”
and,

“In Llongborth I saw the biers
With the dead drenched in gore:”

we have reason to infer that the Britons were, at least, left in possession of the field, for such sights are witnessed only *after* a battle.

Such are the reasons which have appeared to me to justify our identifying Langport with the Llongborth

* Hist. Gildæ. c. 26. . . . obsessionis Badonici Montis, *novissimæque ferme de furceferis non minimæ stragis.*

† Mon. Hist. Brit., p 830.

of Llywarch Hên. I now submit them, with the conclusion to which they have led us, to the impartial and careful investigation of the members of this Society; and while acknowledging my obligation to previous contributors, whose papers have already appeared in the Proceedings, it would not be out of place to call attention to the fact, that there are very few peculiar and characteristic features in any locality, whether physical or archæological, which may not, some time or other, become available for the solution and illustration of historical problems, that would otherwise remain obscure.

Through the advancement of civilization and the elevating influences of the Christian Faith, great and happy changes have been brought about in the character and aspect of society since the period of which this paper treats. The descendants of the Celt and the Saxon, instead of waging deadly war against each other, are merged into one great people, enjoying in common the blessings of their common social and political privileges.

Much as we rejoice in these changes in the aspect of society, I confess, nevertheless, that while looking down from the heights, upon the plains through which the muddy Parret now flows, I have sometimes wished the aspect of the country had not changed; and that we could still stand upon the VOEL-DON, gazing on the expanding æstuaries on either side, glistening in the sun-light beneath our feet, and watch the white sails gliding from their entrance at Combwich, to their ancient destination at Llongborth.

Yet we feel that in the changes of the world there is progress. The beautiful often gives way to the useful. Corn-fields rise with their golden harvest from the depths of the waters. We bow to a higher Power; we acknowledge and revere the Supreme Wisdom of Him, who overrules the affairs of men.

Somersetshire Sequestrations during the Civil War.

BY JOHN BATTEN, JUNR. *

OF all the measures adopted by the Parliament for strengthening their hands in their contest with the ill-fated Charles, none was more effectual than the ordinance of the 1st of April, 1643, declaring the property of those who openly espoused the King's cause, or, in the language of the day, "all delinquents and malignants," to be forfeited for the use of the State. It not only produced very large sums for maintaining the army raised by the Parliament, and meeting other pressing demands, but it deterred many, not actually committed to the King's cause, from taking an active part on his behalf, at the risk of their property and liberty.

* It is hardly necessary for me to premise that my sole object in this Paper is to present the Society with a detail of interesting *facts*, without reference to my own opinions or predilections. Respect for my ancestors should perhaps enlist my sympathies with Parliamentarians and Puritans; one of them, Sir William Batten, having been Vice-Admiral of the Parliament Fleet in the Civil War; and another, the Rev. Henry Butler, M.A., having been ejected, on the passing of the Act of Uniformity, from the Vicarage of Yeovil, and subjected to much persecution afterwards.

That ordinance expressly enacts, " That all the real and personal property as well of certain Bishops therein named, as of all such other persons, either ecclesiastical or civil, as raised arms against the Parliament or voluntarily contributed (not being under the power of the King's party), any money, horse, plate, arms, ammunition, or other aid towards the maintenance of any force against the Parliament, and also two parts in three of the property of all Papists," should be seized and sequestered into the hands of Committees and Sequestrators, named for the several counties throughout England, who were to remit all monies received for rents of estates, the sale of stock or goods, or otherwise, to certain officers in London, to be disposed of as the Parliament should direct.

By subsequent ordinances, the wives and children of delinquents were allowed one-fifth part of the property sequestered, for their maintenance; and (with certain exceptions) the delinquents themselves were permitted to compound for the forfeiture, by payment of a composition not exceeding two years value of the estates sequestered, and a Committee sat at Goldsmith's Hall to conduct the negotiations and assess the amounts to be paid.

The Sequestrators were remunerated by a per centage of 1s. in the pound on the monies remitted by them to the Treasury; and with a party not over scrupulous in the means employed, this was manifestly good policy, as it could not fail to excite activity and zeal in their officers, and to increase the number of delinquents and forfeitures. Accordingly, we find that both by their own exertions, as well as by the assistance of their agents and spies, they were most successful in "getting up" cases, scouring the country for intelligence, and setting a watch upon the

actions of all believed to be disaffected—especially if they were persons of property and consideration.

It must not be supposed, however, that the Parliament were enabled to carry out this measure without difficulty or resistance. Much depended on the fortunes of war, and for some time the continued reverses experienced by the Parliamentary forces, had so weakened the position of their party, that any attempt to enforce the ordinance with any effect, would have failed, especially in the west where the King had been so victorious.

But in the year 1646, which is the period to which our attention will be particularly directed, when the war may be said to have terminated in favour of the Parliament, and the power of the King virtually to have ceased, no such difficulties presented themselves, and the Parliament proceeded without hesitation to prosecute delinquents with unrelenting severity.

The county of Somerset, as well as the other western counties, have always been considered—and correctly so—as favourable to the King. The cause of this feeling probably was, that this part of the kingdom had but little connection with parties engaged in trade and commerce, who were generally disaffected towards the King, on account of his unconstitutional attempt to tax their property. Estates in the west were principally in the hands of noblemen and representatives of ancient families, all whose predilections and pursuits were in favour of the “Right Divine;” and the circumstances to which we have alluded no doubt swelled the list of Somersetshire delinquents.

The Sequestration Committees for the several counties divided them into districts, corresponding, mainly, with the different hundreds. To each hundred were allotted two or

more Sequestrators, and it was their duty, from time to time, to transmit to the Committees accounts of their proceedings, and of the monies derived from the estates under their charge.

One of these accounts accidentally came under my notice lately in examining some old papers.* A slight note of its contents, with some information (very imperfect I fear,) respecting the parties and transactions mentioned in it, may not be uninteresting to the Society.

The document is the account of Mr. Edward Curll, one of the Sequestrators for the Hundred of *Catsash*,† in this county, and extends from November, 1645, to October, 1647, divided into three periods; the first, from 20th November, 1645, to 24th July, 1646; the second, from 24th July, 1646, to 30th June, 1647; and the third, from 30th June, to the 22nd October, 1647.

It details the proceedings against forty-three persons, either resident or possessing property within the hundred, and in some cases, it should be observed, Mr. Curll extended his operations beyond the hundred. The gross receipts for the whole period of the account, not quite two years, amount to £1,455: 13s. 9d., out of which the sum of £99: 8s. 10d. was disbursed for various charges relating to the estates, and £63: 5s. retained by Mr. Curll for the expenses of himself and his two assistants, including their wages at 3s. 6d. a week each, and the keep of

* The original is the property of Wm. H. Helyar, Esq., of Coker Court, to whom I am indebted for the loan of it. Much valuable treasure of local and historical interest lies buried in many of our country mansions; and if the owners would kindly allow the musty contents of their old oak chests to be exhumed and examined, they would contribute very materially to the success of our Society.

† The Hundred of *Catsash*, or *Catash*, lies north of the Hundred of *Stone*, in which *Yeovil* is situated, and comprises many of the parishes lying between *Yeovil* and *Castle Cary*.

three horses ; in addition to which, Mr. Curll submits a charge "for two years rent for a field to provide hay for my horses from Saturday night to Monday morning, at which time I usually lay at my own house."

The connection that subsisted between the parochial clergy and their patrons, most of them Royalists, and the influence which they possessed over their parishioners, added to the natural bias of their minds in favor of the discipline and formularies of the church, rendered them peculiarly obnoxious to the Parliament, who, under pretence of correcting abuses, spared no efforts to supplant them by ministers subservient to their own views.

As far back as the beginning of the year 1641, commissioners were ordered, by the House of Commons, to visit the various counties in England, and investigate certain alleged abuses and innovations. Amongst other complaints which reached the House, by means of these commissioners, was one of the refusal of many incumbents to preach a sermon themselves every Lord's day, or to admit another minister to their pulpits, although the parishioners were willing to maintain him. The House of Commons did not fail to seize this opportunity of declaring that the parishioners were justified, under such circumstances, in procuring a preacher, and a committee, called "The Committee of Preaching Ministers," was appointed to send ministers where they were required, and to provide for their maintenance.

So long however, as the incumbents retained their livings and authority, it was impossible entirely to counteract their influence ; and petitions having been presented, and no doubt procured, from all parts of the country, complaining loudly of the idleness and lax manners of the country clergy, another committee of the House,

called "The Committee of Scandalous Ministers," was appointed, and authorized to eject all such reprobates, upon proof of their guilt—to sequester their estates, and to supply their places with godly and pious preachers.*

We shall not therefore be surprised to find our friend Mr. Curll particularly attentive to the different incumbents within his district.

To take the first in the list, I must admit that if half of the charges against the *Rev. Hugh Collins*, Rector of Compton Pauncefoot, were well founded, his punishment was not altogether unmerited. The charge against him is,

"That he is a lewd and scandalous minister.

"That he had within these four years a base child laid to his charge, which is found to be his own.

"That he was at Oxford (the King's head quarters) lately, and usually, since the beginning of these warres, did send and carry intelligence thither.

"That he made a bonfire upon top of a high hill, for joy of the overthrow of the Parliament forces, at Edgehill, as he reported." A stale offence this, as the battle took place in October, 1642, being the first decided engagement in the war. It was doubtful which party could claim the victory, probably neither; but the King made the most of it, ordering a day of solemn thanksgiving for his success, at the close of which no doubt, the obnoxious bonfire was kindled.

The next accusation is a very grave one.

"That on the 31st of October, 1645, there was one of the General's (Fairfax's that is) soldiers robbed at his house of his horse, arms, and money, and no newes since of the man, so that it is conceived he was slayne in the house."

* The Somersetshire Petition in 1642, prays, amongst other things, "that a sufficient remedy be provided against scandalous ministers."

Whether such a crime was actually committed, is not for us to say ; suffice it, there is no proof; but following as there does immediately a charge, "That he set forth a man in armes against the Parliament," a suspicion is raised that the recruit *may* have sallied forth equipped with the murdered warrior's weapons.

I regret to say that the catalogue of Mr. Collins's crimes is not yet complete ; neither his "faire parsonage house," or his "pigeon house," his glebe or his tithes, prevented him, if Mr. Curll is to be believed, from breaking the eighth commandment; for amongst the stock seized on his premises, were "four oxen, three kyne, two calves, and two swine, which had been stolen away out of Sir Edward Berkeley's ground at Hatherley, in Maperton parish, by the said Mr. Collins." His own stock seems to have been sold at ruinous prices ; twelve sheep were driven to Wincanton fair, and fetched only £5 : 4s., or 8s. 8d. each, and two ricks of hay brought £2. His library of books was valued at £16 : 10s. 8d.

Mr. Wilkinson,* the rector of Weston Bampfylde, was ejected because he was a pluralist, holding Weston and Bradford together, contrary to the ordinance of Parliament, and the parsonage was bestowed, by the Standing Committee, on Mr. Brook, the curate.

The estates of *Dr. Godwin*, Rector of Kingweston, were sequestered because he was a known delinquent, and an idle and scandalous minister ; no particular charges are specified against him, unless his idleness is to be inferred from keeping a curate. Respecting him Mr. Curll appends this note.—"The poor curate, Mr. Barber, is in much want, and his family all wanting clothes and other necessities, and having but £12 a year allowed him by the committee,

* I have given the names as they are mentioned in the MS.

bath not that yet, I not having received so much from the parsonage."

Dr. Pierce, Bishop of Bath and Wells, holding in right of his see the impropriate parsonage of Castle Cary, it was of course sequestered with his other possessions. The Bishop was an old enemy of the Puritans, his high church opinions rendering him a zealous supporter of Laud. Soon after his translation to the see in 1632, he had been very active in carrying out the Archbishop's views respecting the Book of Sports and Pastimes, and produced much dissatisfaction in the county by his conduct. It was in consequence of the Bishop's report to Laud, of the order made by Chief Justice Richardson at the Somersetshire Assizes, on the petition of the leading men of the county, for putting down wakes, revels, and other parochial festivals, that the Chief Justice was summoned before the Privy Council, and severely reprimanded by the Archbishop, for his interference. He told a friend in his way out that he had been nearly choked by a pair of Archbishop's sleeves.

Bishop Pierce was one of the twelve Bishops who withdrew from the House of Lords, on the debate for excluding Bishops from seats in Parliament, and protested against any bill passed without their concurrence. He and his companions were immediately impeached for high treason, and imprisoned; but the King soon after giving his consent to the Exclusion Bill, the prosecution was dropped.

After his deprivation, *Dr. Pierce* resided on an estate of his own, at Cuddesden, in Oxfordshire. At the Restoration, he was reinstated in his see, and enjoyed it until his death. He was the father of William Pierce, Archdeacon of Taunton, and Vicar of Kingsbury Episcopi, whose living was also sequestered, and he himself subsequently

imprisoned, for giving the name of *Charles* to a child to whom he was godfather.

The Improprate Parsonages of Lymington, South Barrow, and Barton, were part of the temporalities of *Dr. Walter Raleigh*, Dean of Wells, and sequestered for his delinquency. The sufferings of Dr. Raleigh ended only with his death. He endured a long imprisonment, aggravated by constant removals from gaol to gaol, in one of which the plague had broken out, and at length, whilst in custody in his own house at Wells, was murdered by David Barrett, a constable, who had been appointed his keeper. No proper notice appears to have been taken by the authorities of this foul deed. His widow and son were frustrated in several attempts to bring Barrett to a trial, and the clergyman who performed the burial service at the unfortunate Dean's funeral, according to the Book of Common Prayer, was imprisoned for disobeying the ordinance forbidding its use.

Mr. Guy Clintom, minister of Alford, was deprived "for reading the Book of Common Prayer, and being very insufficient for the ministry and scandalous in his life ; and his son also conceived to be maintained in arms by him against the Parliament." And a further note is added, that "the son hath been very active since, in the tumult at Bruton."

The abolition of the Book of Common Prayer was always a great object with the Puritans. The Assembly of Divines, a body which had been appointed by an ordinance of the 12th June, 1643, amongst other things, to confer and treat on matters concerning the liturgy submitted to them by Parliament, had framed in obedience to instructions, a new form of prayer called *The Directory*; and the House of Lords on the 3rd January, 1645, being

the day on which they passed the Bill for the attainder of Laud, voted another forbidding the use of the Book of Common Prayer, and establishing, as the ordinance states, "the said Directory for the public worship of God."

By a subsequent enactment, all ministers were enjoined, under a penalty, openly to read the Directory in their respective churches before the morning service, and all the Books of Common Prayer were to be collected by the churchwardens and constables, and disposed of as Parliament should direct.

Mr. William Haskett, the Rector of Maperton, was deprived "for rayling against the Parliament in his sermons, and stirring up the people to goe against the Parliament forces, and for being scandalous in his life." This case shews that it was not without reason that the Parliament were jealous of the practices of the clergy, who both in their public ministrations and private life, had manifested such opposition to the Parliamentary cause. Upon Mr. Haskett's removal, the inhabitants immediately petitioned that Mr. Peter Bradford should officiate in his stead, and having procured a certificate of some able ministers of his ability and fitness, he was appointed to the parish.

The Rev. Anthony Richardson, Rector of West Camel, who next claims our attention, must have been a most determined Royalist. Mr. Curll's charge against him is:—

"That he read the Book of Common Prayer, contrary to the ordinance of Parliament and Directory, until Michaelmas last.

"That he read the Somersetshire Petition publicly in the church, and caused most of the inhabitants to subscribe their names unto it at his house ; and because Wm. Jeans refused, he, the said Mr. Richardson, said it should be the

worse for him ; further saying, ‘ wilt thou turn rebel against the King ?’

“ That he kept the Friday fast, and neglected the Wednesday fast ; proved upon oath by W. Jeans and others.

“ That he set forth a horse in the King’s service, under the command of Colonel Edward Phelipps, as by a receipt under the said Colonel’s hand doth appear, and that he did it voluntarily, appeared by the Colonel’s letter to him.

“ That he gave money towards the maintenance of the King’s army, and also to the maintenance of a servant of his at Langport, as by a MS. of his own appeareth.

“ That when he paid any money to the use of the Parliament, he set it down in his MS., ‘ paid so much, *imposed*—or *imposed* and assessed in the *name* of the Parliament, which shews his malignity.’ ”

His books, which were valued by the neighbouring minister of South Cadbury, at £10, were restored to him. Not so a certain box found in his study, containing £30 : 17s. in money, nor a suspicious kind of “ *buffe* coat,” in the same sanctum, which had cost, according to Mr. Richardson, 13s. 4d.

Mr. Richardson appears to have been much liked in his parish. His plate and goods were removed unto safe keeping, and Curll was seduced to pay several persons money, who promised to discover these valuables, but forgot to do so.—Soldiers were called in by him to assist.—The inhabitants stoutly resisted his collecting the tithes, and the poor man asks in despair, of the committee, what he is to do ? Mrs. Richardson received her fifth part, as provided by the ordinance, having at Ilchester taken the negative oath, which I presume in her case was—not to talk.

The Somersetshire Petition mentioned in the charge,

was one of those presented to Parliament from various parts of the kingdom, deprecating the sanguinary contests which were going on between the King and the Parliament, and praying for peaceable accommodation.

The Wednesday fast, which Mr. Richardson neglected in favour of that on Friday, as being more in accordance with the ancient discipline of the church, originated in the projected Irish massacre and conspiracy, in 1640,* as a memorial of which, the King, at the request of the Parliament, appointed a fast to be observed on the last Wednesday of every month, as long as the calamities of the nation should continue. After the commencement of the war, the two Houses of Parliament passed an ordinance for the more strict observance of the new fast, and all preachers were commanded to exhort their hearers to a solemn observance of it. Business and pleasure were completely put aside, and from nine in the morning until four in the afternoon the religious services continued, with little or no interruption.

Col. Edward Phelipps who is here mentioned, was the son of that Sir Robert Phelipps, of Montacute, or Mountague, as it was sometimes then called, who for his integrity and unflinching boldness in assisting the constitutional rights of the people in Parliament, was styled "the old Roman." In the reign of James, he had succeeded his father, Sir Edward Phelipps, M.P., the founder of Montacute House, as one of the members for this county. In Charles's reign he was again in the Parliament summoned in 1625, but rendered himself so obnoxious to the Crown, that he was excluded in the next, which met in February 1626, being pricked for Sheriff. He was, however, a third time returned member for the county in 1628, and was loud in

* Neal's History of the Puritans, p. 553.

his protestations against Popery; but dying in the year 1638, he saw none of the calamities which soon overspread the kingdom.

Of his son Edward Phelipps, little further is known, than that he espoused the Royal cause with as much zeal as his father had promised to favor the opposite party.

He was a member of the Long Parliament, that deserted Westminster for Oxford, where he sat in the assembly which even the King designated as the "Mongrel Parliament." He was at Exeter during its siege, by General Fairfax, and procured from him a passe (still extant) for permission to leave it. His estate being sequestered for delinquency, he presented a petition* to the Committee at Goldsmith's Hall, on the 16th June, 1646, wherein he states "that through his error, he did unhappily desert the Parliament, for which he is heartily sorry, and humbly craves the favor and mercy of Parliament, praying to be admitted to composition upon two years' value of his estate, according to the articles on the surrender of Exeter." All his personal estate, he says, had been seized and sold by the committee, and amongst his real estate, he includes the rents of the borough of Yeovil, amounting to £13: 6s. 8d., all of which, except 30s. were payable out of certain houses in the borough, which houses were lately burnt and "soe the rent is lost."

The last incumbent we have to notice, is the *Rev. Amias Hext*, Rector of Babcary. No particulars of the charge alleged against him are given by Mr. Curll, but he is very irate with Mrs. Hext, who, after the removal of her husband, kept possession of the glebe and tithes, and actually got one Mr. Yarrow to read Common Prayer, and by her contrivance, and the assistance of the inhabi-

* Original in State Paper Office.

tants, who he says "for the most part are very malignant," he could recover none of the Rector's goods, save four skillets and a brass pot. From other sources we learn that Mr. Hext's main offence was his refusal to take the oath of non-adherence, or the negative oath. For this he was thrown into prison and kept there upwards of a year, although he presented three petitions to the Committee for his release and composition, urging the wants of his wife and six children, who were wholly dependent upon him for sustenance. He lamented, during his imprisonment, that he was debarred of seven things:—1. The society of his wife; 2. The comfort of his children; 3. The conversation of his parishioners; 4. The benefit of his living; 5. The exercise of his function; 6. The enjoyment of his liberty; and 7. The use of his books. Ultimately he procured his release; but of his subsequent history I find no trace.

We now come to civilians; and the *Marquis of Hertford*, as holding the highest rank, claims our first attention, and with him our paper must close. He was Lord of the Manor of Castle Cary, held on lease by Mr. Edward Kirton, a member of the Long Parliament, and possessed also other estates in Castle Cary, Ansford, and Dimmer, all which were sequestered, because, as Mr. Curll states, the Marquis "directed the Parliament, and was one of the first that took arms against the Parliament." Upon the surrender of the city of Oxford, in September, 1646, after the King had fled, the Marquis was included in the Articles, and allowed to compound, which he subsequently did by payment of the large sum of £8,345.

William Seymour, Marquis of Hertford, was the third son of Edward Lord Beauchamp, (who had been created

a Baron under that title, in the life-time of his father Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford,) by Honora, the daughter of Sir Richard Rogers, of Bryanstone, Dorset. In the year 1640, he was created Charles Marquis of Hertford; and on the breaking out of the war in 1642, he was placed at the head of the Commission of Array issued by the King, for raising forces in the west. Coming to the city of Bath, at the time of the assizes, he determined, after consulting some of the chief gentlemen of the county (the Judge and the Sheriff however being against him), to proclaim the Array in the city of Wells, and to make it his head-quarters. By the assistance of Sir John Stawell and others, a considerable body of horse and foot were enrolled; but Sir John Horner and Col. Alexander Popham, at the head of the militia, and reinforced by a detachment from Bristol, under Sir Edward Hungerford, so harrassed and surrounded the Marquis's little army, that after a few sharp skirmishes, he was fain to retreat to Sherborne Castle, then held by the Earl of Bristol. Here he was besieged by the Earl of Bedford, who, finding his force unequal to the attack, withdrew it to the town of Yeovil, expecting supplies. In the meantime, however, the Marquis being reinforced with 300 men, sent him by his cousin Mr. Rogers, High-Sheriff of Dorset, ordered Major Bampfield, with a strong detachment, to fall upon the Earl of Bedford's rear. An action on Babylon Hill, about a mile from Yeovil, was the result, and the Parliamentarians, claiming the victory, instantly dispatched a flaming account of it to London, which with your permission, I will read, especially as it is a fair specimen of the style of military dispatches in those days.*

* I indulge a hope that at some future meeting I may be permitted to conclude the subject of this Paper, as many interesting matters remain to be noticed.

“ A Relation of the Actions of the Parliaments Forces, under the Command of the Earl of Bedford, Generall of the Horse, against those which came from Sherbourn unto Babell-hill, neer unto Yevvell, upon Wednesday, the 7th of this instant September, 1642.

“ Which was extracted out of a letter sent to the Parliament, from Dorchester, the 10th of September, 1642.

“ Signed by—Bedford, Denzill Hollis, John Northcot, George Chudley, Walter Erle, Tho. Wroth, Alex. Popham, Charles Essex, William Strode Pine, Cle. Walker, Hugh Rogers, Ro. Harbin.

“ Upon Tuesday the sixt of September, the Parliaments forces did rise from before Sherbourn, and went that night unto Yevvell, a Town being four miles distant from Sherburn, where we lay on Wednesday to refresh ourselves, upon which day it pleased God to give us a great taste of His Goodnesse, to the great shame and losse of the enemy. About two of the clock in the afternoon there appeared a great body of their horse and foot upon a great hill within a little mile of the Town, called Babell Hill, and so was it truly to them a Babell of confusion. Upon which we presently put ourselves in array as well as we could, to make good all the outwayes, and guard the Magazine, which to do we found but very few men, and more pikemen than musquetiers, for the musquetiers found themselves to be most employed upon all occasions, and therefore, the principally shifted away, and even sent out to their side, where the enemy appeared, three troops of horse and some musquetiers, they standing still at the top of the hill, braving of us and calling us rogues and roundheads. Our men went up to the hill to charge them, Captain Aiscogh one way, Captain Tomson another way, a little after him, and Captain Balfour a third,

and our musquetiers after, as fast as we could. Aiscogh came up to them first, and charged one of the trocps through and through, and charged the second, but then was glad to wheel about; by that time Tomson came into him, and upon the sight of him all the enemies horse began to shog a little, and our two troops coming to charge, they turned and ran away, disbanded and routed; and ours followed upon the execution, and killed many of them, they think about eighteen or twenty, some very well habited, who seemed to be persons of qualitie; and their foot, who had played upon our horse and foot coming up the hill, were left to our mercy, our foot and horse killing them, and they running away like dogs. He that commanded them was one Bamfield, a serjeant-major, who is taken prisoner, and with him about a score of his common souldiers. The rest that commanded the foot are believed to be slain; amongst them one Hussey, a captain, for his commission was found in his pocket, himself clad in plush. Balfoure's troop was forced to fetch a great compasse, for it is a very high hill and ill-way, who could not come in soon enough. If the night had not come on, and a very darke one, we had made a great execution amongst them, for their own strength of horse was there, five or six troops, and most of their foot. Sir Ralph Hopton was there with his troop, Captain Digby, and Sir Francis Hawley, with theirs, and the Lord Paulet, Sir John Paulet, Sir John Stowell, Sir Thomas Lunsford, Colonell Asburnham, Sir John Barkeley, Colonell Lawdy. and Lieutenant-Colonell Lunsford were there. We do verily believe that some of them are come short of home, for they came in the night before the moon rose, with lanthorns and candles, and fetched away the bodies of them of qualitie. We only found the next morning, twenty or thirty of our men; there were but five lost in all, and a

very few, not above three, hurt. All but one of the slain are of Captain Aiscogh's troop, who hath shewn himself a very valiant young man. We desire to know what must be done with the prisoners, whom, till we receive order, we will take care shall be safely kept. Thus it hath pleased the good God of Heaven, who is the great God of battels, to blesse us, whose name we cannot sufficiently magnifie for his goodness to us; bringing on the enemy in their great jollity and strength to be so shamefully defeated by a handfull of us, and those who were tired out with extraordinary sufferance of watching and cold. Blessed be His name for it."

Hamdon Hill.

BY RICHARD WALTER.

THERE are probably few objects in this part of the country which possess more interest than that to which I am about to direct the attention of the Society. Whether we consider the imposing outline of its features, so conspicuous for miles around, its geological formation, its extensive quarries, the produce of which is seen in the buildings of every town and village, or its importance as a relic of antiquity, which must give it a superior interest with the Archæological Society ;—I mean the spot so well known as Hamdon Hill ; of which, being a resident in its vicinity, and having been requested by some too partial friends, I shall endeavour to give some account, although I am conscious that it will be very imperfect ; and as many gentlemen may be present who are better informed than myself, I must crave their indulgence, if my remarks be considered too common, for the sake of some others who may not have had the same advantages.

The insulated position of Hamdon Hill, overlooking a flat country, from which it rises rather abruptly, gives it a bold character, and one is led to suppose its elevation

greater than it really is ; its summit being only about 240 feet above the level of the village of Stoke, below, and just 426 feet above the level of high water mark at Weymouth. The prospect from its summit is very extensive and beautiful ; looking westward over the richly wooded and fertile vallies that extend beyond the Tone, to the hills of Quantock and Williton ; on the north the Mendip chain ; on the east the Wiltshire hills, with the column called Alfred's Tower ; and from thence to the southward and westward, the undulating line of the Dorsetshire hills,—Pillesdon, Lewesdon, and Lambart's Castle, Whitedown, Snowdon, and Castle Neroche ; thus exhibiting a variety of prospect over the surrounding country, not often paralleled. From its loftiest point, a panoramic view of great distance is obtained, unbroken except by a small interruption of the plantations at Montacute Hill. One curious memorial of the olden time, is on the south-west side—a deep combe, now planted as an orchard and gardens, which was formerly the regular road from Taunton to Salisbury, and through which some of the old inhabitants of Stoke, now deceased, have informed me they have seen the old Taunton coach soberly creeping up, on its two or three days' journey to London* ; a not unpleasing contrast to the rocket-like speed with which we are now whisked away on the railroad, in only twice as many hours.

How often have I wished, when rambling over the venerable spot, that it were possible to draw aside the veil of antiquity, and bring to view some of the scenes of the past centuries. What an interesting tale might be told ! Imagination presents to us the simple, unclothed, and untutored Britons, calmly tending their flocks on the down

* This is corroborated by an old mile-stone by the road side, from the hill towards Odcombe, bearing the inscription " 127 miles to London."

near their settlement, at Stroud's Hill ; or engaged with their Druids in idolatrous worship of the heavenly bodies ; next in fruitless contention with their Celtic and Belgic invaders ; then roused to warlike, courageous, yet vain resistance, on their invasion by the better disciplined Roman armies. And who can tell the desperate struggles which have taken place for the occupation of this commanding position, which the Romans well knew the value of gaining ; and retained it, most probably, during their stay in Britain, about 450 years ; availing themselves of the already formed entrenchments, according to their regular plan of castrametation, which appears to have extended only to the quadrangular part of the hill, on the north-west ; where the men working at the stone-quarries frequently bring to light some long hidden relic, which has lain imbedded in the rubble or chasms of the rock, of which I shall have to speak presently.

Geologically considered, the formation of Hamdon Hill is worth notice, consisting, not as generally supposed, of an immense rock of building stone, so well known, and erroneously stated in some late accounts as nearly inexhaustible : for the greater mass of the hill is sand, which largely extends to the eastward, in which boulder stones of a considerable size are imbedded in layers ; and on this sand the masses of compact stone rest, varying in depth from about twenty to fifty feet, below which none has been found. So at no very distant period this valuable stone, from its extensive use, will become more scarce. I say *valuable*, notwithstanding the high and much respected authority of Professor Buckland has denounced it as a perishable material, and discountenanced its use for permanent building. This is a subject on which I would, under present circumstances, speak with delicacy ; only

remarking that the Rev. Professor was mistaken in stating that our ancestors had culled the best of the stone; for it is well known, and evidently to be proved, that formerly the rocks had been worked down to a certain depth only, and left covered up with rubble; below which the quarry-men are now cutting. And it is an experienced fact, that the most compact and durable stone is found at the greatest depth; and this, notwithstanding the denouncement I have mentioned, must still be esteemed a valuable material for massive or ornamental building. It has been classed as inferior Oolite. Its composition appears to be sea sand and minute fragments of broken shells, conglomerated and crystallized together, with carbonate of lime and iron; and occasionally entire shells of pectines, belemnites, and others are found, but usually at the bottom of the rock.

A well having been sunk from the top of the hill, to the depth of about 120 feet; with the assistance of a respected friend, a young engineer, I have been able to make a section,* from which we learn that about 40 feet of *Ham Stone* is penetrated from the top; next about 80 feet of what is termed *Brim Sand*, with strata of rounded boulder stones; next beneath is the *Upper Lias*; then *Marl Stone*. Between the masses of rock are many fissures, or chasms, called by the workmen *Gullies*, running across the hill, which appear to have been formed by a lift from beneath, rending asunder the rock. These are of various width and depth, and lined with stalactite; in them have frequently been found iron and bronze implements, coins and armorial and organic remains. A considerable quantity came to light some years since, of great interest, which will hereafter be mentioned.

* Now in the Museum.

We have here a map of the hill, copied partly from that by a survey of my deceased friend, Crocker, in which I had the pleasure of assisting him. The whole brow of the hill, which is about three miles round, is entrenched, and that with no small labour and skill ; a great part being in fine preservation. To whom, then, are these extensive earthworks to be attributed ? To be enabled to answer this question, it will be necessary to take a retrospect of how this country has formerly been peopled, of which history gives but a very imperfect account ; but we learn that the very early inhabitants of our island were little better than simple savages, unskilled in the art of warfare, and unlikely to have accomplished so great a work. We are informed that the Celtæ, from Gaul, invaded and conquered the country, and retained it until about 350 years before the Christian Era ; and this was probably the age of Druidism, in which were erected those Megalithic structures at Stonehenge, Stanton Drew, Abury, and others of that character. Of these people are occasionally found interesting relics, called Celts—weapons, and utensils of bronze, and arrow-heads of flint, &c.

The Belgæ next invaded this country, *i.e.*, about three centuries before the time of Julius Cæsar, and divided it into sixteen states ; of which, not to mention others, the Belgæ held Hampshire, Wilts, and Somerset ; and as it is stated by historians that they were often engaged in warfare with other states, *i.e.*, with the Morini of Dorsetshire, and the Damnonii of Devon, it is very probable that those extensive fortresses of Hamdon, Lambart's Castle, Pillesdon, Neroche, and many others, were then formed ; which are quite of a different character from those of the Romans, in their irregular shape, following the outline of the elevated ground ; whilst we know that the Roman plan of encamp-

ment was constantly quadrangular. But this warlike people in many instances availed themselves of the ready formed ramparts of their predecessors, as on the N.W. part of Hamdon Hill. On that eastern part of this hill called "Butcher Hill," was found, a few years since, a considerable number of iron weapons, long enough for swords, with a socket for a handle, or shaft rudely formed, apparently for spear-heads. These were probably Belgo-British ; and here it was Sir R. Hoare's opinion that a considerable town had existed, and at the time the survey was made, the ground was, as I recollect, very irregular, with various excavations, now levelled by the plough. No Roman remains, that I have heard of, have been found in that quarter.

To this period may be attributed the formation of the various British roads and trackways through the country. One of which, afterwards the Roman fosse, and now the well-known turnpike, led from Bath, passing near Shepton Mallet, and through Ilchester to Petherton-bridge (then a ford), from whence it appears to have branched off in two directions ; one through Stratton, to Dennington, White-down, Street, and Axminster ; another to the right, through Watgore, Hurcott, Atherston, Broadway, and over the common to Neroche. This country was at that period in a state of hostility between the various tribes. The Morini being divided from the Damnonii by the vale of Honiton, appear to have defended themselves by a chain of forts, of which we may reckon Hawkesdown, Musbury, Membury, Lambart's Castle, Pillesdon, and Hamdon : and the frontier forts of the Damnonii appear to have been Woodbury, Sidbury, Hembury, and Neroche, from their strong entrenchments facing eastward—these being the opposing hills on each side of the Axe and the Yarty rivers.

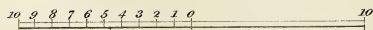
Various other British roads or vicinal ways, may clearly be traced through the country ; several having branched off from the British town on the hill, one in particular, eastward, towards the Montacute plantations ; and another, as I think, from the valley on the hill, called "The Combe," northward, passing near a spring of water, called Wambury Spring ; which, no doubt, was resorted to by the inhabitants of the hill above. Also, one westward passing through the village of Stoke, to the trackway from Ilchester to Ilminster, and probably passing on through the eastern part of Martock, over a common called *Beerly*, or *Badley*, at which place is a remnant of an old road, which points in that direction.

We come now to the more interesting period of invasion by the Romans ; first by Julius Cæsar, who does not appear to have interfered much with this part of the country ; which was afterwards visited by Claudius in the year A.D. 43 ; who for some years remained in Britain, and with Vespasian conquered and retained great part of the S. W. of this island ; and to this era, and the more peaceful sway of Ostorius, may be attributed the various Roman works still evident around us. Their well disciplined armies, it seems, did not so much depend for safety on the strength of their fortifications, as on their excellent discipline and mode of encampment : but where they found a commanding position already entrenched, like that of Hamdon Hill, they appear to have availed themselves of, and in this case to have occupied it, as far as consistent with their usual plan of encampment, which seems to have extended only as far as the quadrangular portion on the N.W. side ;—but where the vallum has been obliterated by the quarry workers. Here exist some interesting remains ; amongst which a circus or small ampitheatre, well-known to pic-nic parties,

CAMP ON HAMDEN HILL.

Area.....210 Acres.

Circumference....3 Miles.



Scale of Chains.





by the euphonious appellation of the “frying-pan,” to which, by the way it bears no small resemblance on a hot summer’s day ; in which many a gay dance and scene of jollification are held : and some of my fair hearers may there have “tripped on the light fantastic toe.” In front of its outlet (or the stem of the pan) is a level space of considerable length, probably a circus, where public games or courses were exhibited. Near this are some parallel rows of stones, extending to a considerable distance, the design of which is rather mysterious, and not easily to be accounted for ; each of them projecting some few inches above the surface (which is here on a considerable declivity), is perforated with an aperture of about two inches in a square or mortice shape. The rows and the distances of the stones which are in rather irregular lines, seven or eight in number, are about twenty feet asunder. Sir R. Hoare, in his paper in the *Archæologia**, dismissed this subject too hastily, and very unsatisfactorily, jumping to the conclusion that they were used to tie up the cavalry. This I consider quite improbable. The situation, exposed to the cold N.E. wind, would render it dangerous to the health of the horses ; and the ground, sloping in some parts as much as at an angle of thirty degrees, would be inconvenient for that purpose ; also the distances between the rows of stones, are much more than would be required. It is also well known that in the Roman mode of encampment, the cavalry were generally in the centre of the camp, surrounded by other troops. Another suggestion is, that these stones were for barriers or seats for spectators to view the games or contests in the amphitheatre. This is open to the objection that several of the rows are so far distant, that the circus itself could not be perfectly seen by persons

* *Archæologia*, vol. xxi.

so placed, nor would the seats be so far asunder for that purpose. Were the stones, then, placed for fastening the cords of the tents? This is more feasible; but so very sloping a surface would scarcely be desirable as a domicile for the soldiers. And then, why are the mortice holes square, when the most obvious mode of making a perforation is by a round aperture? There appears to me a choice of difficulties in deciding this point, and I have as yet heard no satisfactory reason given for these stones, nor is it in my power to account for them. I shall be most happy to hear the opinion of our friends who are about to visit the hill.

I have mentioned that about thirty-five years since some very interesting remains were found in a chasm between the masses of rock on the hill, which were noticed by Sir R. Hoare, in the *Archæologia*, amongst which were the fragments of a light car or chariot; the periphery of the wheel was formed by a single piece of wood, apparently ash, bent into a circle, and bonded with an entire ring of iron, like our modern carriage wheels; the wood part was fossilized or petrified. Various spear-heads of iron and bronze, and parts of harness and military dress were also found; such as spurs of a peculiar make, with a chain attached thereto, bits of bridles, &c. There were also some curious articles of bronze, which had been gilded, that were supposed to be lamps; but on referring to some drawings of Roman harness, I think it pretty certain that such were placed on the front of the saddle as ornamental studs, where we fasten our bearing rein. With these relics were several human skulls and other bones, all partially covered with stalactite; they were mostly taken to Montacute House, and it is sadly to be regretted that they are not now to be found. But the hill still retains in its bosom treasures, (not of gold,) which, as I have mentioned, are

occasionally exhumed by the quarry-men. A fissure or chasm was laid open a year or two since, in which were found many bones of animals and some human skulls ; one of which was taken out by a party of our Society in their excursion on the hill, and is now deposited in our Museum at Taunton. It is the opinion of Dr. Thurnam, an eminent ethnologist, to whom it was sent with a fragment of pottery, that it was either a Roman or an auxiliary in their army. In the same fissure, which is still open, within the last few months, a considerable number of animal and human bones were found ; of the latter, portions of no less than five distinct human bodies lay in a mingled mass ; they were of various ages, one of a child about two years old, and another of about the age of twelve, the others adults. With these were some remains of a horse, many of canine species, the frontal bone of a goat, and some others.

One of those human skulls is curious as a surgical specimen ; there being on its left side the mark of a blow, indenting the outer bone, or *tabula dura*, with a circular fracture, and driving in the inner or brittle table on the surface of the brain, which no doubt was the cause of death.

It would seem that the chasm having been open at that period, though now closed in at the top, served as a depository for dead bodies and rubbish, thrown in without care, as the bodies lay in various directions.

The rock here, as indeed in most parts of the hill, had been quarried, but not to any great depth, and the rubble of fresh quarries had been thrown thereon. Roman coins are frequently found in the neighbourhood. About forty years since, a large earthen vase was turned up and broken to pieces by the plough, at some distance south from the hill, which contained a large number of such coins, some of which I possess. They are small, mostly of copper,

some of a base white metal, probably tin and copper. A few are well executed, but generally they bear very coarse impressions of the heads of the latter Roman Emperors, *i.e.*, Gallus, Tetricus, Philippus, Posthumus, Valerian, Gallienus, Claudius, Quintillus, Probus, Victorinus, Maximinian, Constantine, and a few others. These coins appear to have been little worn by circulation, having probably been coined, and some cast in moulds, for paying the troops in this country ; and had been deposited not long before the evacuation of the country by the Romans. There are also frequently found deposits of smooth pebble-stones, such as are seen on the sea coast, which no doubt were used for slinging, and must have been dangerous projectiles to have come in contact with a human cranium.

There are various outworks, which I think may be clearly traced in the country around. On the south side of the fosse, now the turnpike road, near *Venn Bridge*, and not far from the section of the new railway, are two parallel lines of entrenchment, in good preservation, about seventy yards in length, not far from a field called *Stanchester*, which was probably an out-station of the Romans, although there are no remains visible, except stones burnt by fire, turned up by the plough ; but tradition speaks of there having been buildings thereon. In a field above *Brimpton*, and near a spot called *Camp*, appear some raised lines of earth, much like ramparts, which I think worthy of being more carefully examined. These are near the road leading eastward from Hamdon Hill towards East Coker ; near which was found, some years since, the beautiful fragment of tessellated pavement, lately kindly presented to our Society by W. Helyar, Esq., which is now in our Taunton Museum. I must here mention that in the same field from whence it was exhumed, bearing the name of "*Chesils*,"

or "Chedzils," still remain, at least one, and probably more pavements.

A part of this interesting spot I am happy to announce as having been just laid open by our Yeovil friends, within the last week, and will be one of the subjects of this morning's examination. No doubt this spot was the site of an officer's villa or country residence. Of such, many have been discovered in this country, and are usually at some few miles distant from the military camp, affording a pleasant retreat to their possessors from the din of war. Of the Roman roads in the neighbourhood of the hill, I am sorry not to be able to give a very luminous account. I have mentioned the British trackway, afterwards the Roman fosse, which led through Ischalis (Ilchester), westward, and is now the turnpike-road. At Ilchester, which is said to have been an extensive station of the Romans, other roads met; one from Dorchester (Durnovaria), another from Glastonbury, within a few miles of which the beautiful villa at Pitney was found. That to Dorchester may, I think, be clearly traced for many miles; *i.e.*, to Vagg Hill, where it crosses the turnpike and leads to Preston; then near Furzy Nap, on the Yeovil and Crewkerne road, which it crosses and goes on through Barwick, &c. At Ilchester, some years since, was found a massive and valuable gold ring, bearing a fine head of the Emperor Severus, I believe; it is now in the possession of J. Moore, Esq. Several others have there been dug up, and many coins of Antoninus Pius, Constantine, and others: indeed, the town is still rich in Roman remains, and worthy of antiquarian research. Portions of a causeway crossing the ford are still visible in the bed of the river, a few yards below the bridge. I think it questionable if many truly military roads were formed by the Romans in this part of

the country, though they largely adopted and used the British trackways already formed, which suited their purpose.

On contemplating those remains, the work of men whose bones for many centuries have mingled with the dust, and on witnessing those vestiges of military skill, which was requisite when this country was in a state of warfare, the mind is led into an awful yet pleasing feeling of veneration. This classic spot, Hamdon Hill, which once resounded with the clang of arms, and the clamour of sanguinary strife, is now the retreat of rural quiet, and silence, unbroken, except by the tinkling of the sheep-bell, the simple strains of the shepherd boy attending his flock, or occasionally by the merry music of a pic-nic party. It is a matter of grateful felicitation that we are now living in an era when the progress of civilization, the march of intellect, and, above all, the benign influence of Christianity, have rendered such fortresses no longer necessary ; for in this favored country, once the scene of idolatrous superstition and savage life ; and since that of civil warfare and intestine commotion ; we are now allowed to sit each "under his own vine and fig-tree," and enjoy the bountiful gifts of a kind Providence in peace and safety.

On the formation of Peat Bogs and
Turbaries, which extend from the
Bristol Channel into the central
parts of Somersetshire.

BY REV. W. PHELPS, F.S.A.

THE various changes apparent on the surface of the earth since the first creation, have attracted the attention of the philosopher from an early period of the history of the world ; whilst the more recent discoveries of the geologist, have developed the great disorganisation and derangement of the component parts of the outward crust of the habitable globe.

The effects of the general deluge are visible both on the surface of the earth and beneath it ; and when we penetrate its superficial crust, or descend into the deepest mines, we find evident traces of the awful catastrophe consequent upon the breaking up of the “fountains of the great deep” ; and the present state of the earth’s surface is not such as could have been the result of its original formation, for it

bears everywhere the traces of great derangement and revolution. The lapse of time since the first constitution of our earth, must have occasioned great changes; the effects of climate, heat and frosts, being everywhere discoverable in rounding and smoothing the rugged character of the surface, and reducing the more elevated points.

Since the period of the universal deluge, these ever acting causes have been in operation; but there are others aiding and assisting in the same great changes, which are apparent on the earth's surface. The ocean, which received the Almighty fiat, "Hitherto shalt though come, and no further, nor turn again to cover the earth," by its constant agitation, and the flowing and ebbing of its tides, has also produced considerable changes on the shores exposed to its influence. On the eastern coast of Kent its inroads have overwhelmed immense tracts of land, which are now called the Goodwin Sands, from the name of their possessor, the Earl of Kent, and are now extensive shoals, dangerous to mariners.

In these changes we may observe something like a balanced and compensating effect between destruction and renovation by the powerful agency of the sea; headlands and promontories, whose component parts are of a soft and friable nature, yield to the constant action of the waves, and are washed away; but the soil thus torn from the heights is annually thrown back, and according to its quality forms extensive tracts of marsh land along the less exposed parts of the coast, or is accumulated in the sea, becoming shoals and sand-banks along the shore.

2. The extended marshes which border on the Bristol Channel, in Somersetshire, bear evident traces of having been, at an early period, æstuaries of the sea, and their boundaries may be easily traced along the base of the

elevated lands which surround them, at the level of high water. The tides of the Bristol Channel are remarkable for the great height to which they rise, compared with those on the south coast of Devon, arising from the peculiar form of the shores of that æstuary, being funnel-formed, and exposed to the full force and action of the tidal wave of the Atlantic ocean. The spring tides rise at the Holmes to the height of 40 feet or more, and to this cause we attribute the vast extent of marsh land on the borders of the Bristol Channel, whilst on the coast of the English Channel at Lyme, the rise is only 17 feet. The silty bottom is sometimes in the form of sand, as at Westhay in Meare ; at others, deposits of marine exuviae, which have been driven up into banks in the interior of these marshes, and have also formed lines of a former shore, easily to be traced along many parts of the border of King's Sedgemoor, at Sutton-Mallet, Compton-Dundon, under Ham-hill, Othery, Middlezoy, and Weston-zoyland. The etymology of the latter villages indicates their situation in the "Sowey," or "Zoyland"—that is sea-land.

The subjacent clay does not contain shells, but the alluvial deposit abounds with both marine and fresh-water shells. At the present time the sea would overflow these moors, if it were not excluded by banks and tide sluices in the rivers ; as the ordinary level of spring tides is above the surface of the adjoining lands near Glastonbury, and the moors around Meare, Wedmore, Axbridge, and on the borders of the great Brent Marsh. There is a record in the church of St. Benedict, Glastonbury, of the height to which the water of an inundation of the sea, rose.

The substratum of these marshes is red marl, which occasionally rises up into ridges of moderate elevation,

running parallel with the Mendip hills, and is overlaid with beds of blue and white lias rock. This indurated marl is seen on the sides of the deep channels of the rivers Axe and Parret, near their exit into the sea.

3. The filling up of these marshes next claims our attention, and here we find natural causes operating in a variety of ways to effect it. The waters of the Bristol Channel are remarkable for their muddy appearance. This arises from the beds of clay over which they flow, situated at the entrance and along the bed of the river Severn, and other streams which flow into it from the clay soils of Somersetshire. The waters thus saturated with clay being kept in constant agitation by the tides, which here flow with great rapidity, and rise to the height of from forty to fifty feet perpendicular, necessarily leave a great deposit of alluvial matter, whenever its current becomes impeded, or its motion retarded and stopped. This sediment being exposed to the influence of the sun and wind, during the interval between the ebb and flow of the tide, becomes in a certain degree hardened, and receives the deposit of the next tide ; and so by repeated accumulations the whole becomes consolidated and in time fit for the purposes of vegetation. It may further be remarked, that the difference in the height of the spring and neap tides leaves a considerable space of its shore dry for several days. During this interval, aquatic plants and grasses grow up, and on the return of the next spring tides become a receptacle for the subsequent deposits, which increase so rapidly as soon to form banks above the level of the ordinary tides ; which in the course of time become the barrier against itself, so that the highest tides only pass over it. The consequence of this barrier was, it converted the low lands of the interior into a lake, or morass, covered during the

winter months with fresh water ; and formed a lake of considerable extent, having a small outlet into the sea at the points, no doubt where the rivers Parret, Brue, and Axe, now discharge their waters. In this way we may readily conclude, the great barrier and ridge of sand banks running from Brean Down to Burnham and Huntspill were formed, the river Brue being the outlet on the south-west at Highbridge, and the Axe of the district lying at the foot of the Mendip range.*

4. We find the former æstuary blocked up by the barrier noticed above, converted into a lake, covering the extent of district previously overflowed by the tide, though now occasionally affected by its entering the level by the outlets or rivers which carried off the flood waters. At this period, we may presume the labours of man commenced ; when by sluices erected at the mouths of rivers, and by banks thrown up along their course, the influx of the tide was prevented from inundating the low lands. In consequence of these works, the lands becoming partially dry in the summer, vegetation soon began and spread rapidly over the district, and was the origin of the rich pastures now to be seen in these situations. In the more morassy parts, aquatic plants soon covered the waters, and became the incipient ingredients in the formation of the Peat bogs.

It has been observed that no stream, whatever its size,

* The following observations made by Mr. De Luc, a foreign geologist who visited England some years since, are striking, and show the rapid accumulation of alluvial marine deposits. "When," says he, "the tide rises towards the coast, the whole moves together forward, and exercises its action on the bottom, agitating and raising the mud which it carries towards the shore, and there deposits it during the interval between the flowing and ebbing of the tide ; but when the water retreats it flows back from the surface only, beginning from the shore, and exercising scarcely any action on the bottom."—*De Luc's Travels in England*.

from the smallest brook to the Mississippi or Ganges, flows onwards for any considerable distance in the direct line of its descent. Its bias continually oscillates from one side to the other, in proportion to the inequalities of the sides of its channel. From this oscillatory mode of advancing forwards, all streams have a tendency to wear themselves a channel in a serpentine form. Where the stratum is of a uniform character and density, the curves of the river are generally alternate on each side, and correspond with almost geometrical exactness; the angle of incidence equalling the angle of reflection.

It may not be irrelevant to our present subject, to notice in this place, the singular curvatures of the channels of the rivers Parret, Axe, and Brue, at a short distance before they enter the Bristol Channel. On casting the eye to the map of the county of Somerset, we discover each of these streams to make a curve of considerable extent near their embouchure, almost encompassing a large tract of alluvial land.

5. The filling up of these morasses, next claims our attention, and here we find two causes in operation at the same time; the one, the growth of aquatic vegetables, subsequently converted into peat; and the accumulation of alluvial matter brought down by the rivers in floods, and deposited on the lands within reach of their influence.

The action of running water is a powerful agent in carrying away the finer particles of the earth's surface, when rendered soft and friable by the effects of frosts, and by the descent of rain in sudden showers and storms, sweeping away a considerable portion of the softer strata. And we also find a volume of water rushing down an inclined plane, with a force increased by being confined between high banks, or contracted between projecting

rocks on points on each side of its course, carries with it large portions of coarser matter, as stones, gravel, and sands into the lower parts of a valley, and there deposits the larger bodies first, then the smaller, and lastly the finer, according to their respective densities, till a stratum of alluvial matter is spread over the surface of the adjoining land which in time becomes fertilized in so high a degree as to be almost inexhaustible; and to this cause also is to be attributed the level appearance of all these marshes, as nothing but the action of water could have caused their present level character.

The rapid accumulation of alluvial deposit in any situation open to the influx of the tides of the Bristol Channel, and not affected by a counter current, is demonstrated by the filling up of the original bed of the river Brue, at Highbridge. The old channel was abandoned in consequence of a new outlet being made, about fifty years since, to improve the drainage of the marsh above. This cavity was filled up in about 25 years, to a depth of nearly twenty feet, with the deposit of the tide, and became cultivated land, producing fine crops of corn. It was excavated again, and now forms the entrance to the Glastonbury Canal navigation.

The time required to effect these changes is as nothing in the calendar of nature, when measured by the standard of human calculation. Our own recollection is sufficient to have witnessed the great change which has taken place in these marshes in less than half a century. When, therefore, we refer these considerations to a period of two or three thousand years only, we see there has been ample time for effecting these changes on the earth's surface.

Our ancestors, aware of the vast importance of protecting this district from inundation by sea or land water,

which would fill the marsh low lands, obtained a Royal Commission (33 Edward I., 1304) to inquire into these important matters, when Robert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, Gilbert de Bere, and John Gereberd, were appointed inspectors. Afterwards we find similar commissions issued to the possessors of lands, manors, and lordships bordering on these marshes, among whom are the names of Sir Matthew de Furneaux, John de Merriet, Richard de Rodenay, John de Godelee, Dean of Wells, John de Clevedon, Sir John St. Loe, and many other influential persons in the reigns of Edward II., Edward III., and subsequent sovereigns.

ON THE FORMATION OF MARSH PEAT.

1. Peat is a vegetable formation, which overspreads certain extensive tracts of land in various parts of the earth's surface. In Ireland, Scotland, and England we find it to a considerable extent; in the former portion of the united kingdom a vast portion of its surface is covered by this formation, even now almost in a state of nature, and unproductive to the use of man.

Peat is of two kinds, viz.,

I. Mountain-peat, a black mould, with numerous grains of quartz sand intermixed with it, and found on the top of mountains; and

II. Bog-peat, which is the subject of our investigation.

In Somersetshire we find extensive tracts of land provincially called Turbaries, filled with peat, and a short account of its natural history forms a necessary appendage to the observations which we have already addressed to your notice.

“Peat,” according to the definition given by Mr. Parkinson, “is a congeries of various sorts of vegetables collected in water, which to the last degree of their decomposition, retain their combustible property, and may be deemed a secondary fossil.”

“Peat,” says Professor Brande, “is a superficial stratum of vegetable matter, which at different depths is undergoing, or has undergone various stages of change and decomposition. Its superficial appearance is that of a mass of half-decayed mosses, rushes, heath, and grass. The roots having successively died away, though the upper part of the plant continued to vegetate. The mass is ligneous, and imbued with humus and humic acid, among other products of slow decay; and the abundance of moisture pervading the bog reflects the character at once of the peat and of the district.”

“The upper layers of the bog are usually loose and fibrous, and of a pale brown colour. Beneath the surface the density is found to increase, sometimes to a great extent. At length, the distinct characters of the vegetables cease to be discernible, and the mass appears nearly homogeneous, and of a dark brown or blackish colour. Trunks of trees, and some geological phenomena occasionally present themselves.”

Peat may be rendered valuable either from the charcoal which may be obtained from it, and by the various products derivable from what is called its destructive distillation. The elements of peat are essentially those of wood and coal, viz., carbon, nitrogen, hydrogen, and oxygen; and when distilled in close vessels, the products obtained would, as might be expected, resemble the products of a similar operation on wood and coal. The efficiency of this charcoal in the manufacture of iron, in

consequence of the small quantity of sulphur it contains, is proved, and its deodorising and purifying qualities are extremely valuable.

In drying, peat fully decomposed loses one-third of its weight; the lighter surface turf, one-half. Four tons of dried peat will give about one ton of charcoal, and its products on distillation are:—1. Sulphate of ammonia. 2. Acetate of lime. 3. Pyroxylic spirit. 4. Naptha. 5. Heavy fixed oil. 6. Paraffine, a material to be used in making candles.*

The situation in which it is generally found has been either lakes of moderate depth, or hollows on the surface of the ground capable of retaining water at all seasons of the year; and the progress and growth of peat is thus described by an intelligent observer:—"Reeds constantly precede the other vegetables in lakes, because they are able to raise themselves above the surface of the water from a greater depth than most other aquatic plants; thus they advance forward in proportion as the bottom attains a sufficient elevation in their front; as soon as they gain a certain height, other aquatic plants begin to grow, and rise between their stalks, till they become so thick as, at the last, to occupy the place of the reeds before them. The reeds advance in front; the *confervæ* thicken the mass, which is soon overspread by the sphagnum tribe, lichens, rushes, grasses, and a variety of plants natural to such situations. These plants become so thickset that they consolidate on the surface on which they grow, and sink with it into the water. The mosses and *confervæ* rise again the next year, and cover the surface on which they grow, producing a new race of plants; these in turn decay, and sink from the surface, and at length reach the bottom

* Athenæum for February, 1852, p 221.

of the water, and by the pressure of the annually accumulating mass, become consolidated, whilst those on the surface also grow, decay, and drop in their turn ; so that in the course of years a spongy mass is gradually elevated above the circumjacent waters, and finally becomes so solid that heaths, willows, and other ligneous plants grow up and cover the surface with their beautiful foliage and flowers."

2. It seems requisite to the formation of peat that the waters of the morass should be stagnant and not exposed to the admixture with other water or currents, as the vegetable particles which compose peat being macerated in the water, the water wherein they grow becomes highly astringent and antiseptic, and congenial to accelerate the growth of peat vegetables. If, however, a current of water passes through it, the astringent juice is washed away, and the chemical agent for converting vegetable matter into peat is then lost.

This mass or congeries of plants, by the alternations of growth and decay, forms the bed of peat, and continues to increase rapidly, if undisturbed, soon rising above the adjoining lands, being kept in a buoyant state in the winter and summer by the water contained in the spongy matter. The mass of peat also rises in the winter, and in the summer, in proportion to the quantity of water accumulated in the basin on which it rests. This curious circumstance is noticed by the inhabitants living on the borders of these Turbaries, who see objects across the bog in the summer, which are intercepted by the elevation of the surface of the peat in winter.

The general thickness of the vegetable mass in the centre of the bog is from fifteen to eighteen feet. A common opinion prevails that the pits cut for fuel grow up

again in a few years, which is an error. The cause of these pits becoming filled with turfy matter is that the pressure on the particular spot having been removed by the excavation of the peat, the substratum being in a semi-fluid state is forced up into the pit, by the pressure of the surrounding mass. The surface by its buoyancy thus keeps out of the reach of floods, which would otherwise stop the further growth of the peat bog plants, and its alluvial deposit on the surface, would cause an almost immediate growth of pasture grasses.

This mass of decomposed vegetable matter becomes, at the depth of about three or four feet, an homogeneous semi-fluid and dark-coloured substance, and undergoes a fermentation, which develops the bituminous and inflammable property. In this state, when dug and dried for fuel, it affords a highly combustible substance, and produces, when in a state of ignition, hydrogen gas, ammoniacal liquor, and coal-tar, and seems to corroborate the opinion that coal owes its origin to vegetable matter.

The coffee-coloured water always found in the pits dug out for fuel, has an astringent taste, and is so highly antiseptic, that animal matter immersed in it may be preserved a great length of time, undecomposed. An attempt was made some years since, to apply it to the purposes of tanning leather. The tanning principle was however found to be too weak to effect any beneficial purpose. Dr. Ruddy, in his Essay on the Mineral waters of the kingdom, observes, "Moss water is possessed of an antiseptic and embalming property, and not only remains pure and free from putrescency, but it retards the putrid fermentation both of vegetable and animal matter immersed in it ; that the ligneous shrubs, trees and parts of animals are found in a state of unusual preservation, as is seen in the oak

and other trees, constantly found embedded in it in a perfect state ; and," he adds, "the air of peat bogs is more salubrious in consequence."

Peat is impervious to water in a high degree, and retains it like clay. When dry it becomes a hard, tough, and ponderous mass, and is one of the most insoluble substances, and least liable to decay. In Holland it is frequently used to lay under the foundations of their houses, where it remains unchanged for ages, and when the building has been totally decayed by time, the peat remained entire. Peat contains, in 100 parts, from 60 to 80 parts of matter destructible by fire, and the residuum consists of earth, usually the same kind as the substratum of soil on which it rests, together with a portion of the oxide of iron. Kirwan, states "that a piece of dried peat was put into the boiler of a steam engine for three months, yet though exposed to heat greater than boiling water, it remained unchanged. The only appearance it exhibited, was that the surface of it was covered over with a kind of powder of iron which attracted the magnet ; the centre and all but the surface remained unchanged."

3. The accumulation of alluvial clay and other earthy matter over the peat formation is visibly ascertained in the excavations made in forming new channels for the draining of these marshes, and in digging foundations for bridges, as at Highbridge, in 1804. At the depth of seven feet in the alluvial deposit, the workmen came to a stratum of indurated peat,* lying beneath it, and on it a heap of Roman pottery in fragments, with pieces of small bricks, such as are used to separate vessels in the kiln when they are burnt ; also, moulds for casting coins, we presume of zinc,

* This peat so compressed is called pill-coal, being nearly as ponderous as coal.

procured from the Mendip Hills, which much resemble silver, and formed the spurious coins. All these circumstances prove that the surface of the peat was at that time dry, when occupied by the Romans. The late Mr. Anstice, of Bridgwater, who superintended the building of the sluices of Highbridge, found a considerable collection of Roman fragments. He also discovered the traces of the Roman road across Brent-Marsh, (coming from "Trajectus," Portbury, by Banwell, and "Bomium," Cross,) six feet below the present surface of the land, shewing how much the marsh has been elevated since the time of the Romans.

The surface of the peat bogs in Somersetshire is generally covered with varieties of heath, willows, bog-myrtle, and numerous other ligneous plants; lichens, sphagnum, and mosses, all interesting to the botanist.

Since it has been drained, and subdivided by ditches and watercourses, the whole has become more consolidated, and large plantations of forest trees, fir, birch, alder, &c., have been made. The oak is still found in some parts, growing luxuriantly, and to a considerable size in the peat. When the surface of the bog has been broken by digging, a decomposition of the peat takes place, and in a little time becomes a black light vegetable mould, capable of producing grass, corn, potatoes, and turnips. To give it a proper stimulus, however, the application of lime and heavy earth of a tenacious quality, is necessary to consolidate its particles; when it becomes capable of bearing wheat and other white crops; and when laid down to grass affords excellent pasture, for the feeding of cows particularly. Large tracts have been dug up, and brought into cultivation.

The following vegetables enter into the formation of

peat—*Schoenus mariscus*, *schænus conglomeratus*, *arundo phragmites*, *juncus squarrosus*, *juncus articulatus*, *potamogeton* of different kinds, *myriophyllum*, *ceratophyllum*, *lemna*, *byssus*, *equisetum*, *eriophorum* and *polystachion-vaginatum*, *sphagnum*, lichens. We find on the surface *myrica gale*, *andromeda polifolia*, *narthecium ossifragum*, *drosera latifolia* and *rotundifolia*.

In these peat bogs we also find oak and other forest trees lying prostrate, with their roots decayed, embedded in the peat, about two feet beneath the present surface. They are in such numbers as to leave no doubt but that a wood heretofore covered the bog. By what change of circumstances they became destroyed is a matter of speculation. Oak, and other trees of the kind we find there, do not grow in water; and at the period when these trees flourished on the spot, no water overspread the surface. Now, the tract of land on which they grew is below the level of the tide at high water; it therefore follows, that some barrier must have been erected at the mouth of the river to keep back the influx of the tide water.

The following is an attempt to account for this phenomenon. We learn from ancient documents, the whole of this tract of country was an extensive morass, and held by the Abbots of Glastonbury. At a period which we cannot precisely fix, a sluice was erected at the mouth of the river Brue, to keep back the tide from entering the river; but most probably when the Abbot of Glaston made a new channel for the river Brue, from Northover, to form a navigable communication with the Bristol Channel, a collateral channel was then dug to communicate with the Axe, called *Pilrow-cut*, of which the traces now remain, secured also by a tide sluice, against the influx of the tide at "New-bay," the point to which the Axe was at that

time navigable, and was the canal and port of the Abbot of Glastonbury. This produced a considerable effect in relieving the country from its waters, and it is probable during this period, and before the dissolution of the monastery, in 1545, the trees occupied the soil, and continued to grow there. On the dissolution of that monastery an interval elapsed, during which the property of the Abbot fell into the hands of the crown, and that attention to the canal and outlets for the water (which had been so carefully cleansed, under the positive injunctions of the Abbots to their tenants, and formed a part of the covenants under which they held their land), became neglected and choked up with weeds, so as to impede the course of the water into the Axe and Brue. The result of this negligence was, that the low lands became again covered with water, surrounding the trees which grew on the surface, which soon decayed at their roots, and were thrown down by storms. The plants which compose peat were again called into activity, and soon covered these prostrate trees to the depth of two or three feet, where they now lie, preserved from decay by the antiseptic quality of the peat.

On a subsequent drainage taking place, this marsh was reduced to a lake about 500 acres in extent, called Meare Pool, and in this state it continued till the year 1800, when an Act of Parliament was obtained for perfecting the drainage ; the effect of which has been to convert the lake and morass into fine pasture land during the summer, and it is annually enriched by the alluvial deposits brought down by the river Brue, which during the winter months is suffered to overflow the district.

By draining and dividing this bog into fields, by ditches, a consolidation has taken place, and the surface rendered capable of agricultural operations, and from the improve-

ments made during the last forty years, we may predict that before the end of the present century scarcely a vestige of the peat bog in this district will be discoverable, and the future botanist will seek in vain for those rare indigenous plants which now flourish in this district.

Such are some of the changes the surface of the earth is now undergoing, from natural as well as artificial causes.

The survey of the river Parrett and its tributary streams, with observations on King's Sedgemoor, and the extensive marshes bordering on the rivers Parrett, Tone, Ivel, and Ile, will form the subject of a future paper.

Woodspring Priory.

BY REV. F. WARRE.

THE rise of the celebrated Thomas a' Becket, otherwise St. Thomas of Canterbury, to almost unlimited power under King Henry II.; his contest with that monarch on the subject of Papal jurisdiction and the rights of the church; and his bloody murder at the very foot of the altar, in the year 1170; are historical facts known to everybody: and whether we consider him according to the bias of our religious and political opinions, a turbulent traitor, a patriotic assertor of the rights of the commons, a champion of the oppressed Saxon against his Norman tyrant, a hot-headed zealot, or a martyr to the Church of Christ, we can hardly deny him the credit of having been a sincere, honest, fearless, and single-minded man. But though these are facts generally known and now almost as generally admitted, there are perhaps, even among the present company, some who may not be aware that of the four fierce Barons who in consequence of a hasty speech of their King, perpetrated the atrocious murder of an Archbishop at the altar of his own cathedral, three at least, if not all, were west countrymen, and two undoubtedly residents in this county. Fitzurse, of Williton; Brito, of Sandford Bret; Tracy, of Morthoe, near

Ilfracombe, and Morville, who I believe was also a land-owner in Devonshire, were the actors in a tragedy which caused a general feeling of horror through the whole christian world. That powerful monarch, Henry II., proud Plantagenet as he was, submitted to a degrading penance, having been publicly scourged before the high altar by the monks of Canterbury, while a' Becket, canonized by the Romish church, was even to the time of the Reformation held in veneration as a saint and martyr, and miracles were said to have been worked at his shrine, which the gifts of persons of all ranks and nations soon rendered one of the richest in Europe.

Under these circumstances we can easily suppose that the descendants and relations of these unhappy men would have been most anxious to testify their regret, and according to the custom of the day to endeavour by gifts to the church to expiate the crime of his murder. It was to this feeling that the Priory of Woodspring,* or Worspring, owed its foundation. We find preserved in the Cottonian Library an autograph letter from William de Courteney, who was nearly related to the Tracy family, to the Bishop of Bath, signifying and submitting to him his intention of founding a conventual house at Worspring, for the good of the souls of his father, Robert, there buried, of his mother, himself, his wife, and those of his ancestors and descendants ; and we find that in the year 1210 the same William de Courteney removed the house of canons regular of St. Augustine, dedicated originally to the blessed Virgin and St. Thomas a' Becket, from Dodelyn, to his manor of Woodspring, and endowed it with considerable property. At this removal it was dedicated to the Holy Trinity, St.

* Woodspring is situated in the parish of Kewstoke, 8 miles N.W. of Axbridge, Somerset.

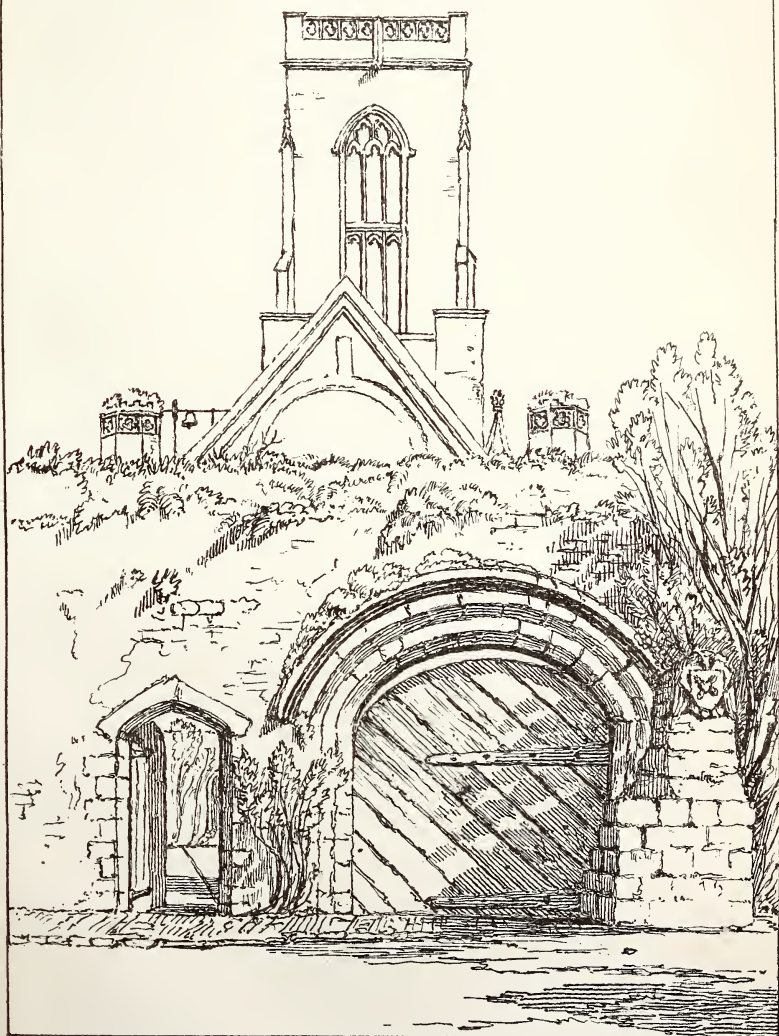
Mary the Virgin, and St. Thomas the Martyr. The accounts of this Priory are unfortunately very meagre. The canons probably led a contemplative and unambitious life, and we may hope a religious and useful one also; for they enjoyed a good repute with their neighbours, as may be inferred from a charter of the 18th of Edward II., which recites and confirms the grant to this Priory of lands in Somerset, Wilts, and Dorset, by William de Courteney, Galfrid Gilbeyn, Hugo de Nyweton, Henry Engayne, Robert Offre, John de Eston, Alicia Offre, Henry de Pendeny, Henry Limechest, and Richard de Hordwell, many of them names still in existence in this part of England. At the valuation of its estate in the 26th of Henry VIII., its annual income amounted to £87 : 2s. 11½d., and the head is styled Abbot, though it was undoubtedly a Priory of canons regular of St. Augustine, following the rule of St. Victor, and connected with the great Abbey of St. Augustine, founded at Bristol by Fitzharding of Berkeley. A very imperfect impression of the common seal of this Priory is extant in the Chapter House of Westminster, appended to the acknowledgement of supremacy, A.D. 1534. It represents an ancient church, situated over an arch, underneath which is the gigantic head of a man; the impression is in red wax.* This is all that I have been able to collect of the history of the society which for so many years inhabited these conventual buildings; and though it might be

* From Rutter's Somerset, page 59. "The name of the earliest recorded Prior was John, in 1266, 50th of Henry III. Reginald Prior, in 1317, 10th Edward II. Thomas lived in 1383, 6th of Richard II. Thomas de Banwell died in 1414, 2nd of Henry V. Peter Loviare was elected in the same year. William Lustre died in 1457, 35th of Henry VI. John Turman was elected in the presence of six canons, in 1458, 36th of Henry VI. Richard Spryng was Prior in 1498, 13th of Henry VII., and resigned in 1525, 16th of Henry VIII. The last Prior was Roger Tormenton, elected 24th September, 1525, but on 21st day of August, 1534, subscribed to King Henry's supremacy."

more interesting had they taken a more active part in the affairs of their times, it certainly can be no cause of blame to a body of churchmen that they followed, as we will charitably hope they did, the duties of their profession according to the light they possessed, and abstained from interference in temporal matters.

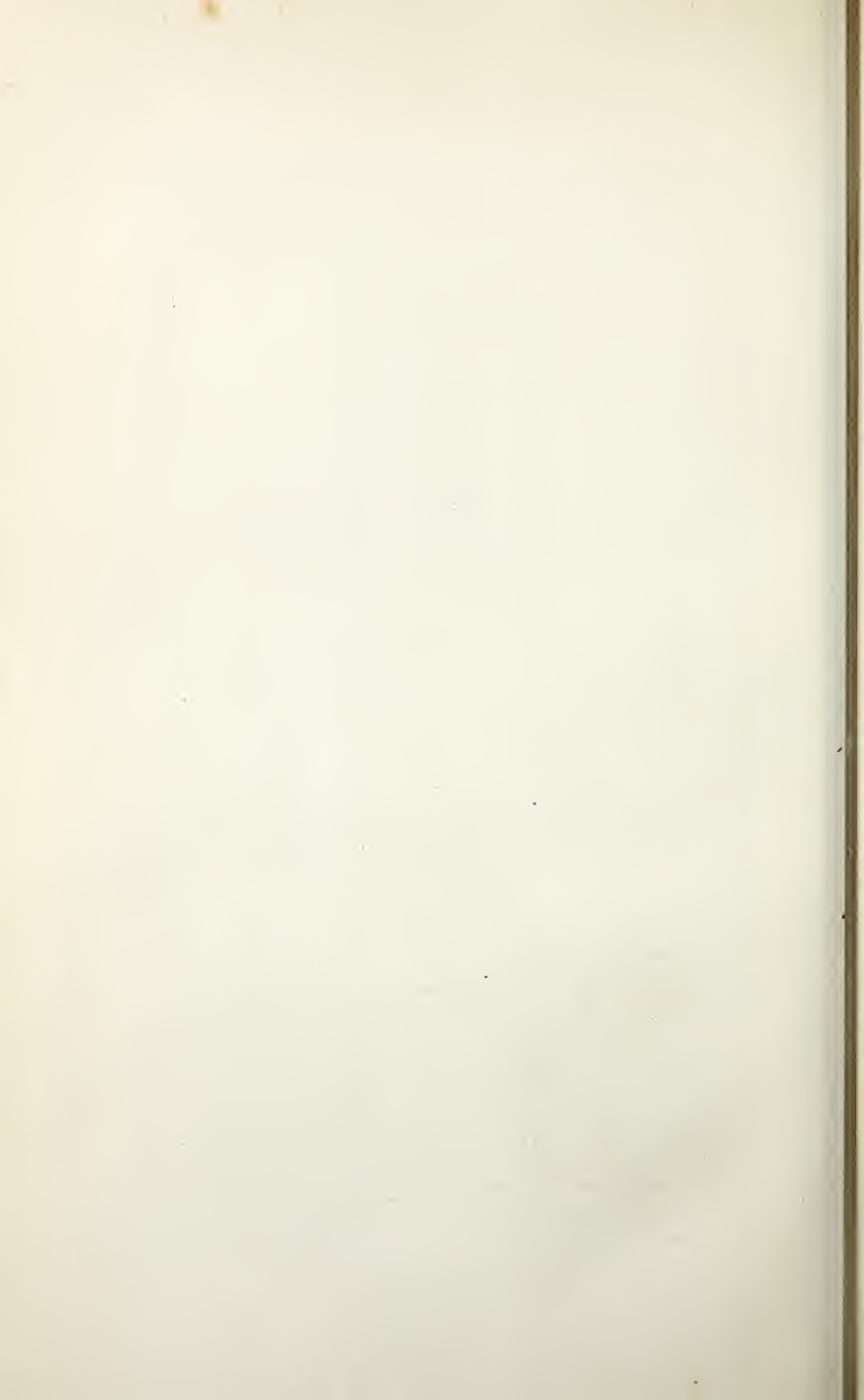
I will now proceed briefly to point out the most remarkable features of the venerable remains of this once beautiful structure. The first point to which I would draw attention is the entrance, which consists of a large gateway. There is a smaller door or wicket on the north side. The arches in both cases are segmental or small segments of large circles, a form not uncommon in buildings of the 14th century, to which date their construction may safely be referred. The weather moulding of the large gateway, is a very fine specimen of the style, being composed of the scroll moulding, with a bead under it, which is rarely met with except in buildings of that period. The projections on each side of the road ornamented with escutcheons, on one of which is blazoned the fine stigmata or wounds of our Saviour ; on the other, a chevron between three bugles ; are probably of comparatively modern construction. We now find ourselves in a small court, bounded on the north by a range of domestic buildings, which I should be inclined to suppose of Post-reformation date, though some parts, particularly the string course, may be older ; and on the west by the wall of the cloisters, which retain some fine gurgails. Immediately before us is the west front of the church. This, when perfect, must have presented to the beholder a very fine composition of late Perpendicular character, though now sadly mutilated by the insertion of modern windows. The large west window, now built up, occupied nearly the whole of this front, rising from a bold

string course which extends from buttress to buttress ; these are in the form of octagonal turrets. The cornice moulding of the building, is peculiarly bold and good, and passes round these turrets, which are raised above it and terminate with an embattled parapet, under which is a course of quatrefoils, each side of the octagon being occupied by one quatrefoil within a square ; that part of the turret which is above the cornice moulding, projects slightly beyond the lower walls. On each side of the window was a canopied niche, and there appears to have been a similar one above ; this and that on the south have been totally obliterated ; in that on the north an episcopal figure may still be traced. We now enter the cloister ; the entrance to it from the church is now the door of the farm house, into which the whole nave and north aisle, as far as the tower, have been converted. The nave, with the central tower, a fine Perpendicular structure of somewhat earlier date than the rest of the church, consists of three bays having large windows, (now built up) of a character similar to that in the west front. On the south side of the tower is a staircase turret, terminating in a pyramidal pinnacle, with a finial and parapet of Tudor flowers, an arrangement very common in this neighbourhood. On the north side is an aisle of three bays, (having an entrance to the church in that at the western extremity,) extending as far as the eastern side of the tower, into which it opened by a splendid arch, the effect of which, together with that opening to the nave, must have been very fine. The whole of the remaining part of the church, with the exception of the tower is occupied by the present dwelling-house. I am unable to say anything as to the piers and arcade between the nave and aisle. The fan tracery of the tower is very beautiful. The chancel or



COWELL'S ANASTATIC PRESS, IPSWICH

Woadspring Priory.



choir, which, as in all conventual buildings, was long, no doubt extended much to the east of the tower, and took away from the apparent height of the church. It is now totally destroyed, though the chancel arch remains. I wish to call your attention to the fact that the lower part of the south-west buttress of the tower is composed of part of the jamb of a window, similar to that in the tower, which would lead us to suppose that it had been built up after the destruction of the chancel, perhaps to supply the support the tower was deprived of by the demolition of the chancel walls. There is also on the north side of the tower, at the height of the roof of the aisle, a mass of masonry, for which I am totally at a loss to account. The remains of the cloisters, which are of the 14th century, occupy the space on the south of the nave and tower, the west wall of the enclosure standing flush with the west front of the church; the entrance from them to the church, is, as I have before mentioned, the door of the modern farmhouse, above which the pitch of the cloister roof is distinctly marked upon the wall. All vestiges of the interior of these cloisters have vanished, with the exception of what appears to be the remains of a corbel table, and the entrance to a small turret at the south-west corner. Opposite to this there was a passage to the refectory, and in the east wall of the enclosure are two arches, now built up, and the mutilated remains of a doorway, the arch of which is of Decorated character, and must, with its elaborate cusps, have been exceedingly beautiful. The domestic buildings of the Priory, including the Prior's lodging, occupied the greater part of the orchard on the east of the church, as is evident from the marks of foundations, extending nearly over its whole extent. All these, however, are gone, with the exception of the refectory, which is now used as a

waggon-house. This is a very beautifully proportioned room of early Perpendicular character, 45 feet long, and 19 wide ; the eastern part has suffered from the ravages of time and violence, but the rest is nearly perfect ; on the north side it was lighted by two very beautiful windows, the traces of which still remain ; they are of two lights, and are divided by a transom. Two doorways give access to this noble hall, one at the west end, over which is a small window of two lights ; the other at the east end of the north side, the very elaborate mouldings of which are still in fine preservation. A staircase turret may be observed in ruins, on the south side, but I can find no traces of any fire-place. These, with the exception of a very fine monastic barn, which stands in a perfect state on the north side of the Priory, are all that remain of the magnificent foundation of William de Courteney.

I cannot, however, leave the subject without mentioning the discovery of a very curious reliquary in Kewstoke Church, as it is probably connected with the dedication of Woodspring Priory to St. Thomas of Canterbury. The weight of the clerestory having forced out the north wall, which was of fourteenth century work, it was recently pulled down, and a mutilated piece of carved work, built into it, on being removed, was discovered to be a reliquary. In the front is carved a figure in an arched niche, having shafts of Early English character. This figure, the face of which seems to have been purposely mutilated, holds something, probably a heart, in its hands, but it is so defaced that it is now quite impossible to decide what it is. At the back was discovered an arched recess, having within a small wooden cup, containing what is supposed to be the residuum of human blood. This reliquary is manifestly of earlier date

than the wall into which it was built, and appears from the capitals of its shafts nearly to correspond in style with that in use about the time of the dedication of Woodspring. The opinion of the Archæological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, to which it was submitted, was, that it probably contained the most valuable relique possessed by the Priory,—some of the blood of Thomas a' Becket, and that the monks, foreseeing the desecration of their conventual church, had deposited it in the parish church of Kewstoke, hoping by that means to preserve from profanation a relique, in their eyes, of the greatest sanctity, being no less than the blood of their murdered patron, St. Thomas of Canterbury.

This invaluable reliquary is, by the kindness of the Rev. R. C. Hathway, the Vicar of Kewstoke, at present in the Museum of the Society at Taunton, and is perhaps the most curious discovery of the kind that has been made in England for many years.

Observations on the Marine Flora of Somerset.

BY ISABELLA GIFFORD,

Author of the "Marine Botanist."

IN examining the chief characteristics of the Marine Flora of Somerset, I shall at first enumerate those kinds which are indigenous on the coast, commencing with the Melanosperms or olive-green division of the Algæ. We find four species of Fuci growing luxuriantly throughout the district, viz. :—*Fucus vesiculosus*, *F. serratus*, *F. nodosus*, and *F. canaliculatus*. Not so any examples of the Laminariaceæ, nor of the Sporochnus, Dictyota and Chordaria tribes. In the Ectocarpaceæ, we have *Cladostephus spongiosus*, growing occasionally on stones near low-water mark below Minehead Pier,—and the beaded or moniliform fruited variety of *Ectocarpus littoralis*, I find on wood-work near high-water mark at Minehead. This is the kind described in the first and second editions of "Harvey's Manual of the British Algæ," but is not that figured in the "Phycologia," t. 198. This last has oblong striated fruit, and appears to vegetate at a greater depth than the former. Professor Walker Arnott observes, that

in my Minehead plants the ordinary cells are slightly constricted at the dissepiments, a peculiarity which he had not before remarked, and proving to him that *Cladophora Gattayæ*, figured at t. 355, b. of the "Phycologia," is an *Ectocarpus*, and he believes this very plant in a young state. *Ectocarpus tomentosus* has the same habitat as *E. littoralis*, and often grows intermixed with it. By the naked eye *E. tomentosus* may be distinguished from the latter by its much finer filaments, resembling in size those of *E. siliculosus*,* but usually more intertwined and twisted together than in this plant. The fruit when viewed through the microscope is seen to be very different from that on *E. littoralis*. It consists of *obtuse* and linear oblong silicules, supported on little pedicels. In *E. siliculosus* the silicules are drawn out and very *acute* at the tips.

Proceeding to the Red Series in the first tribe (*Rhodomelaceæ*), two species of *Polysiphonia* claim our notice; the one, *P. nigrescens*, grows commonly in tide pools along the coast; and the other, *P. fastigiata*, abounds on its usual habitat, the old fronds of *Fucus nodosus*. In the next tribe (*Laurenciaceæ*), we have only *Laurencia pinnatifida*, rarely found at Minehead, but common in the pools on Bossington beach. *Corallina officinalis*, belonging to that curious tribe of algæ whose tissues are firmly encased in a coating of carbonate of lime, is extremely abundant in all pools along the shore. In the *Rhodymeniaceæ* we cannot reckon with certainty, more than *Gracilaria confervoides*,

* In salt-water ditches, near Shirehampton, Gloucestershire, Mr. Thwaites discovered a species (*Ectocarpus amphibius*, Harv.) with fruit intermediate in character between that of *E. littoralis* and *E. siliculosus*. It does not appear to have been observed in Somerset. In the salt-water ditches on the Norfolk coast it is noted as "not unfrequent." I have looked in vain for it in the tide ditches at Minehead. *E. siliculosus* I sometimes see growing with *E. littoralis*. It appears, however, in such a poor condition and so rarely that it seems hardly to deserve notice.

which is frequent in sandy pools, to the west of Minehead Pier. Several species of the Cryptonemiaceæ occur on the coast, the rarest of which is *Grateloupia filicina*, growing in pools on the Warren beach at Minehead, and I believe, with the exception of Aberystwith, this is the northernmost station that has yet been recorded for the plant. *Gelidium corneum* μ , *clavatum*, covers the rocks at Clevedon in dense patches, barely half an inch in height, and at Minehead it grows on wood work near high-water mark. *Catenella opuntia* occurs in the same habitats as this species, both at Clevedon and Minehead. I have also seen it vegetating in crevices of the large boulders, under Greenaleigh-hill, at Minehead. *Gigartina mamillosa* is found in pools on the Warren beach, at Minehead, and is frequent at Bossington. *Chondrus crispus* abounds in all the pools along the coasts, but nearly ceases to vegetate at Clevedon, where I only observed one small plant of it. *Polyides rotundus* is common, growing in pools near low-water mark, on the Warren beach, at Minehead; and *Dumontia filiformis* is likewise found there in pools nearer high-water mark, and on Bossington beach. Among the tribe of the Ceramiales, three species of the genus *Ceramium* are frequent; the common *C. rubrum* is abundant on stones and on other algæ in tide pools. I remark at Minehead a pretty slender corymbose variety of this plant, never more than four or five inches in height. When immersed in fresh water it decomposes much more rapidly than the larger and coarser forms of the species. The ramuli are much incurved, and though it cannot be considered as a distinct species from *C. rubrum*, it is so distinct and well marked in its general aspect from the many varieties of *C. rubrum* usually met with, that I have deemed it right not to pass it over unnoticed in the present paper. Its habitat, I have observed,

is almost exclusively on the fronds of *Chondus crispus*. *Ceramium flabelligerum*, I find growing in pools at Blue Anchor, and on wood-work at Minehead. Though marked as "rare" in the works of Dr. Harvey, I believe, from the number of specimens which I have received from correspondents in different localities, that it is a species generally distributed on the shores of the British Isles, but probably, from its near resemblance to *C. rubrum*, often overlooked by the collector. It may not be amiss for the guidance of such, to observe, that the colour is very like that of *Polysiphonia fastigiata*, nor is the ramification very unlike, but the filaments are finer than in the latter; microscopically it may be known by the *unilateral* spines, which arm the outer edge of the branches. These, however, are frequently absent on Somerset specimens, only appearing near the tips of the ramuli. In such cases the *proportionate* larger size of the cellules and cylindrical articulations afford the best characters by which it may be discriminated from *C. rubrum*. The *opaque* articulations are at once sufficient to distinguish it from *C. acanthonotum*, a British species armed with a row of microscopic spines in the same manner. *Ceramium Deslongchampsii* is found in the pools at Blue Anchor, Minehead, and Bossington beach; when well grown it forms handsome tufts of a very dark purple colour, the articulations are transparent, very short in the ramuli, and not easily seen excepting in the main stems. Of the beautiful genus, *Callithamnion*, we have two examples, *C. Borreri* and *C. Rothii*, diminutive, though well fruited specimens of the former grow with the latter on the rocks at Clevedon. When mounted in Canada Balsam they form very pretty and interesting objects for the microscope. On the mud-covered rocks at Blue Anchor, *C. Borreri* grows in tufts of three or more inches in height,

Lately, however, specimens of it have been received from New Zealand. The primary fruit is contained in a raised nerve-like line, which traverses the centre of each division of the frond; and when this is present, the plant may easily be recognised. The secondary fruit, tetraspores, occur in round sori on the frond. These I first discovered on Minehead specimens; and plants with this description of fruit have not been found at Plymouth, nor does it appear an abundant species there.

On Minehead beach the young plants are to be met with in June; in the following November and December they attain their full growth. One single plant with tetraspores was obtained by the dredge in Cork Harbour, by Mr. Carroll, in 1851; and in June of last year (1853), a young plant with incipient fruit (linear) was picked up by a relative of mine, on the beach at Lynmouth, North Devon. I have no doubt that were the dredge employed, it would be found to grow in deep water off that coast, and the adjoining part of Somerset. In all, I have noted about forty species drifted ashore at different times on Minehead beach. It is not, I believe, important to give their names here, for in this notice my aim is rather to show what field the Algologist has to work on in this district, and to point out those species that may always be met with in their proper seasons, than to detail a list of kinds only occasionally met with, and not ascertained natives of the coast. My own opportunities of visiting localities between Clevedon and Minehead have been very few; but I conclude that in favorable situations, the several species growing at the former place may likewise be met with at intermediate spots.

The portion of the Bristol Channel which comes within our notice, ranges from about Portishead, on the

east, to a little below Porlock on the west. The upper and greater half of the Channel can scarcely be characterised otherwise than an æstuary, whose waters contain a great admixture of fresh water from numerous rivers, and a quantity of mud and detrital matter, brought into it by the same means; doubtless to the growth of the majority of submerged sea-plants, these conditions are peculiarly inimical, but there are some, as the beautiful *Callithamnii*, which delight in muddy situations, so also does the *Stenogramme*, which seems confined to harbours and æstuaries. *Grateloupia filicina*, *Enteromorpha compressa*, are observed to flourish better in spots where fresh water streams run over the beach, than elsewhere. After Blue Anchor, the water is much clearer, and the algæ become better colored. Bossington beach affords remarkably fine specimens of these which I have noted in this paper as growing there. Unfortunately the beach below that is of such a nature as to preclude the growth of inter-tidal vegetation, but probably if it be possible to use the dredge off that part of the coast, it may prove to be the best spot in the district for the growth of deep water algæ.

Appendix to the paper on Worle Camp,

*In the Proceedings of the Somersetshire Archæological and
Natural History Society, 1851, p. 64.*

THE results of my investigations on Worle Hill during the year 1852 have been, to my own mind, highly confirmatory of my original theory:—That the place was destroyed by Ostorius in the reign of the Emperor Claudius, and deserted during the period of the Roman occupation; that the black earth and burnt wood which are usually found a few inches above the solid rock, in most of the hut circles, are the remains of the roofs destroyed at that time; and the burnt corn and other objects found below the layer of black earth, are leavings of the inhabitants of the place at the time of Ostorius's attack; and that the pottery is almost all of British manufacture, some of extreme antiquity, some probably Belgic, the work of the last two or three centuries before the Roman invasion. That at the time of the West Saxon irruption, under Ceawlin, in the year 577, some of the Romanized Britons took refuge within these ramparts, and that the skeletons, and the iron weapons found with them, are to be referred to the desperate hand to hand contest which took place after the Saxons had stormed the defenders of the fortress.

In the month of May I was particularly successful in my discoveries of pottery, of which three vessels, now in the Museum of the Society, have been satisfactorily restored by Drs. Tomkins and Pring. Besides pottery, we found many skeletons, several of them bearing marks of great violence ; two very good iron spear-heads ; several flint flakes, prepared for arrow-heads ; a quantity of bones of animals and water-fowl ; corn, more completely burnt at the top than below, shewing that the fire came from above ; a piece of the horn of some animal, fashioned apparently into the mouth-piece of a musical instrument, and ornamented with a rude pattern ; a piece of burnt wood, with holes drilled through it ; iron spikes, similar to the one found piercing one of the skeletons, which were probably the heads of very rude javelins ; fragments of bronze and wooden ornaments ; three kinds of burnt grain, wheat, barley, and some sort of pulse ; and parts of two concentric circles of iron, which were lying one within the other, and had much the appearance of having formed part of a shield.*

In the autumn, my discoveries were very similar in character to those made in the spring, with the exception of some bones of oxen, which appear to be those of the *Bos-longifrons*, a species which became extinct in these islands at a very early date, though certainly existing here during the British period. One discovery was made, which at first sight seemed to militate against my theory, but which, on closer consideration, I think rather confirms it than otherwise. Having finished the excavation of one hole, we were walking over the hill to another, when a workman struck his pick-axe into the ground by chance, and brought up a small piece of pottery, which I at once

* Several of these are figured in the Proceedings for 1852, p. 12.

recognised as coarse Roman ware. I of course began to dig upon the spot, and within an area the breadth of which was not more than five or six yards, we found similar fragments of pottery, enough to fill several baskets; upwards of 200 coins of the later empire; a great many glass beads, and fragments of bronze ornaments.

Now had these Roman remains been found at the bottom of one of the holes, or had the pottery been scattered over the whole area of the fortress, as is the case with that of British manufacture, I own my theory would have been much shaken; but they were quite at the surface—so much so, that when the turf was taken up, coins and beads were hanging in the roots of the grass; and the coins were such as there is reason to suppose were in circulation some centuries after the Romans had left the island; and I see no reason for doubting that they were the property of some Romanized Briton, who had sought refuge within the ramparts at the time of Ceawlin's irruption.

But perhaps the most interesting discovery of the year remains to be mentioned. In Mr. Atkins's plan* of the fort and its outworks, many triangular platforms are marked, which he supposes were used for slingers; and I confess that when he first mentioned them to me, I thought there was a great deal of imagination in his idea; but upon clearing away some of the rubble from the face of the rampart on the west side of the main entrance, I discovered a peculiarity in its construction which certainly confirms Mr. Atkins's opinion in a great degree. Instead of being, as I expected it to prove, a plain battering wall of dry masonry, I find that the whole face of the rampart is composed of a series of platforms, about three

* Proceedings for 1851, p. 64.

feet in depth, and about four feet above each other, not placed regularly one over the other, but almost like scales, the whole finishing with a parapet, which acts as a breast-work to an internal platform. The outer face of the rampart is of piled masonry, sloping inwards very considerably, so that in fact the very steep side of the natural hill, and that of the artificial rampart, which is not very much steeper, are fortified on nearly the same plan. This would certainly enable the Britons, who were celebrated as slingers, to use their weapons with great effect against an attacking force ; the immense number of pebbles well calculated for sling-stones, which have been found immediately within this rampart, were no doubt intended for this mode of defence.

F. WARRE.

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WITH THE

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THE ARCHITECTURAL SOCIETY OF THE ARCHDEACONRY OF
NORTHAMPTON.

THE SUSSEX ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

RULES.

THIS Society shall be denominated "THE SOMERSETSHIRE ARCHÆOLOGICAL AND NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY;" and its objects shall be, the cultivation of, and collecting information on, Archæology and Natural History, in their various branches, but more particularly in connection with the County of Somerset.

II. The Society shall consist of a Patron, elected for life; a President, elected for three years; Vice-Presidents; General, and District or Local Secretaries; and a Treasurer, elected at each Anniversary Meeting; with a Committee of twelve, six of whom shall go out annually by rotation, but may be re-elected.—No person shall be elected on the Committee until he shall have been six months a Member of the Society.

III. Anniversary General Meetings shall be held for the purpose of electing the Officers, of receiving the Report of the Committee for the past year, and of transacting all other necessary business, at such time and place as the Committee shall appoint; of which Meetings three weeks notice shall be given to the Members.

IV. There shall also be a General Meeting fixed by the Committee, for the purpose of receiving Reports, reading Papers, and transacting business.—All Members shall have the privilege of introducing one friend to the Anniversary and General Meetings.

V. The Committee is empowered to call Special Meetings of the Society, upon receiving a requisition signed by

ten Members.—Three weeks notice of such Special Meeting, and its object, shall be given to each Member.

VI. The affairs of the Society shall be directed by the Committee, (of which the officers of the Society shall be *EX-OFFICIO* Members) which shall hold Monthly Meetings for receiving Reports from the Secretaries and Sub-committees, and for transacting other necessary business ; five of the Committee shall be a quorum.—Members may attend the Monthly Committee Meetings, after the official business has been transacted.

VII. The Chairman, at Meetings of the Society, shall have a casting vote in addition to his vote as a Member.

VIII. One (at least) of the Secretaries shall attend each Meeting, and shall keep a record of its proceedings.—All Manuscripts and Communications, and the other property of the Society, shall be under the charge of the Secretaries.

IX. Candidates for admission as Members shall be proposed by two Members at any of the General or Committee Meetings, and the election shall be determined by ballot at the next Committee or General Meeting ; three-fourths of the Members present balloting, shall elect. The rules of the Society shall be subscribed by every person becoming a Member.

X. Ladies shall be eligible as Members of the Society without ballot, being proposed by two Members, and approved by the majority of the Meeting.

XI. Each Member shall pay ten shillings on admission to the Society, and ten shillings as an Annual Subscription, which shall become due on the first of January in each year, and shall be paid in advance.

XII. Donors of Ten Guineas or upwards, shall be Members for life.

XIII. At General Meetings of the Society the Committee may recommend persons to be ballotted for as Honorary or Corresponding Members.

XIV. When any office shall become vacant, or any new appointment shall be requisite, the Committee shall

have power to fill up the same ; such appointments shall remain in force only till the next General Meeting, when they shall be either confirmed or annulled.

XV. The Treasurer shall receive all Subscriptions and Donations made to the Society, and shall pay all accounts passed by the Committee ; he shall keep a book of receipts and payments, which he shall produce whenever the Committee shall require it ; the Accounts shall be audited previously to the Anniversary Meeting by two Members of the Committee, chosen for that purpose ; and an abstract of them shall be read at the Meeting.

XVI. No change shall be made in the Laws of the Society, except at a General or Special Meeting, at which twelve Members at least shall be present.—Of the proposed change a month's notice shall be given to the Secretaries, who shall communicate the same to each Member three weeks before the Meeting.

XVII. Papers read at Meetings of the Society, and considered by the Committee of sufficient interest for publication shall be forwarded (with the Author's consent) to such Periodical as shall be determined by the Committee to be the best for the purpose, with a request that a number of such papers may be printed separately, for distribution to the Members of the Society, either gratuitously or for such payment as may be agreed on.

XVIII. No religious or Political discussions shall be permitted at Meetings of the Society.

XIX. That any person contributing Books or Specimens to the Museum shall be at liberty to resume possession of them in the event of the property of the Society ever being sold or transferred to any other county. Also persons shall have liberty to deposit Books or Specimens for a specific time only.

N.B. One of the objects of the Society shall be to collect by donation or purchase, a Library and Museum, more particularly illustrating the History, Natural, Civil, and Ecclesiastical, of the County of Somerset.

* * * *It is requested that Contributions to the Museum or Library, be sent to the Curator, at the Society's rooms, Taunton.*

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 Pigott, H. T. C. S. *Brockley Court*
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 Pinchard, W. P. *Taunton*
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